

PRESS CONFERENCES

of

THE PRESIDENT

1953 - July 1 to Dec. 31

Henry M. Kansee,  
Official Reporter.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #306,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
July 7, 1936, 4.05 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Let us talk agriculture. I have got here some pretty well up-to-date charts which I think Steve (Mr. Early) can take out to the Press Room and pin them up so that you can see them.

They show pasture conditions on June 1. The black belt is the extreme drought, and the conditions on July 1 -- see what a difference there is? -- and this here (indicating) is the statement of rains from July 1 to 6, so that the three of them, between them, give you a pretty good idea.

The general situation is that while there are still drought conditions in the Southeast, that is to say southern Kentucky, northern Tennessee and Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, that is not our principal problem. There are also drought conditions, as I said before, in eastern Oklahoma and western Arkansas, which have been slightly relieved in the last two or three days.

The principal problem is, of course, in the Northwest, especially in the Dakotas and eastern Montana and northeastern Wyoming and extending now into northeastern Minnesota.

There are about, all told, in all of these drought areas, including the Southeast and Southwest, about 204,000 families who need some form of immediate cash relief. The bulk of them are, of course, in the Northwest.

We have worked out a fairly comprehensive plan by which we are putting to work at the present time, on W.P.A. jobs, 50,000.



These 50,000 are doing useful work, chiefly in the following forms: digging wells, in other words going down to water and, secondly, building earth dams so that when rains do come they won't all run off all of a sudden. Third, they are building farm-to-market roads. Those are the three principal forms of actual relief work. Those workers are being paid weekly wages and will continue until snow flies. In other words, they will be taken care of with actual work until it is impossible to work outdoors in that area.

Q May I interrupt to ask you what the weekly wage is?

MR. AUBREY WILLIAMS: About \$15. a week.

THE PRESIDENT: About \$15. a week. That will keep them going and, in a good many cases, will take care of some of their needs into the winter. I won't say through the winter, but into the winter.

Q Has that payment started?

THE PRESIDENT: They are going to work at the present rate in Minnesota of 800 new workers a day. In North Dakota it is 2,000 new workers a day, in South Dakota 2800 new workers a day and in Montana, eastern Montana, 400 new workers a day.

Q Does your chart show a breakdown for the Southeast as against the Northwest in the number of sufferers?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think so. The great bulk is, of course, in the Northwest.

Q Mr. President, those are chiefly wheat states, are they not?

THE PRESIDENT: Mostly wheat, yes.

Q Isn't the wheat ready for harvest?

THE PRESIDENT: No, there isn't any to harvest. It just isn't there



to harvest.

MR. WILLIAMS: The spring wheat crop has been hit so hard that very little of it will be harvested in this area.

THE PRESIDENT: The wheat crop will be about 15 per cent of normal.

Then, number two, we are taking care of 50,000 families with subsistence loans and subsistence grants. That is part of the regular resettlement work, but that is in addition -- in other words, those are new people. Then of the 200,000 that are already on subsistence loans and grants, there are 70,000 there, so that gives you a total of 150,000 who are either being taken care of or are going to be taken care of in the course of the next few days at this rate of putting them on. The program will be actually under way probably in a couple of weeks.

That leaves a gap of about 34,000 families which still has to be filled and we are working towards that end.

Now, the cattle problem. I will take that up first. Cattle are going out of that area, as a private enterprise, in fairly large volume but the price is holding up. Individual cattle raisers who have fair-sized herds are able to move their cattle out quite satisfactorily at the present time, to move them out to market or to feeding, one or the other. The people who find it difficult to handle the situation are chiefly the small cattlemen, the individual fellow who has only eight or ten or fifteen or twenty cows and with him it is principally a problem not only of getting them out but of keeping some title in him. <sup>[them]</sup> In other words, we don't want him to lose all of his breeding cattle for next year or lose his immediate title. That is why we are going



to use every effort and not to buy cattle ourselves and process them for food. We prefer to loan the money to those individuals and let them ship the cattle out as feeders. They would retain the title to them. You know the process: You send the cows out to somebody else that has grass, for instance in western Montana and Idaho, and you pay that man so much a month a head. I think the usual price is a dollar a head a month or something along that line. You retain the title to the cattle you ship out and they are not immediately processed and also it gives you an opportunity of retaining breeder stock for next year.

Then on the question of wheat -- I am going rather into detail because I don't suppose there are more than three people in the room that know a damn thing about the subject, with all due deference.

Q Who are they, for instance?

THE PRESIDENT: Earl Godwin, for instance, he is an honest farmer.

There you are. (Laughter)

The wheat acreage this year -- the wheat acreage, mind you -- is nearly 10 per cent higher than the average wheat acreage from 1928 to 1932. Now, that explodes a great many stories, doesn't it? It explodes lots and lots of stories, especially the ones written for political effect. Ten per cent more wheat acreage in the country this year than for the average of 1928 to 1932. Of course the yield is going to be away below the average and that is caused by the drought, but the actual acreage planted to wheat is nearly 10 per cent higher than the average of those years.

Q What were those years?



THE PRESIDENT: 1928 to 1932. The same thing is true of corn acreage.

It is up over last year and so is the wheat acreage. In other words, the shortage is not due to any decrease in acreage. Write that down. It is due to drought.

Q What are the payments for crop curtailment?

THE PRESIDENT: Soil conservation, in other words, putting in a rotation of crops.

Q I meant how much will go to those states in these payments?

THE PRESIDENT: Turning it into pasture land and vice versa. I cannot tell you the actual figure.

MR. TUGWELL: We would have to look it up.

Q These farmers will get money?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes. Crop curtailment works both ways. If you curtail wheat, for example, you put in pasture and pasture land does not get hit by drought to the same extent as crop land, which gets burned up. For example, in 1934, Nebraska produced only seven-twentieths as much corn as they produced in 1933, but they produced more than half as much sorghum and other hay and forage crops and of course, as I say, in a drought the hay and forage crops do not suffer to anything like the same extent as corn, wheat, oats, etc.

Now, we also have, as part of the program, to encourage the harvesting of forage crops in order to take care of these cattle which have not enough feed in the drought area. We do that without any decrease in benefits for the people who did not plow their land but turned it into a feed crop.

Q Is that a monetary encouragement?



THE PRESIDENT: No, they have their contract -- they have their benefit contract. It is not a contract -- you know if they go in for diversified farming, they get so much of a bonus. They get the same bonus if they cut their forage crop and ship it into the drought area, no more.

Q Will that be enough feed for the cattle?

THE PRESIDENT: We hope so.

Q Tell us about Mr. Farley. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Then, there is another thing we might as well explode.

I'm afraid somebody back there is not interested in farming. I will come to the other feature, it is all right.

Q Before we get into this, can you tell me in dollars what this is going to amount to?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet. That is too much spot news. Let us look at this thing from the immediate angle.

Q Does this fund come from W.P.A. money?

THE PRESIDENT: Comes from all kinds -- W.P.A., Resettlement, etc., Surplus Commodity Corporation. Now, what I do want to point out is this: Up there in the northwestern area there have been stories, as usual, that we are going to take everybody away and depopulate the country.

Q You would not take them away, would you?

THE PRESIDENT: We are not going to take them away at all and nobody ever had any idea in their sane senses of depopulating the country. What we are going to change is what might be called the economy of the country. The country is going to support a population. As wheat land, no; it is not working because the water table drops



down 8' a year. The result is the water runs off and the surface blows away.

We figure under a proper use of this country it will support perhaps not quite as many people but very nearly. There are lots of human beings today who can remain there if they will do the right thing. For instance, if we can get grass back there, it means that the acreage will be used more and more for cattle. People have to look after cattle. There are certain places out there, certain valleys, where the water table has not disappeared, where you can grow vegetables, truck and small crops that take human beings to look after them. There are certain areas which can be and should be forested. It will take human beings to look after that.

What we are working on is a plan to avoid a continuation of what we have been through now for the last three or four years. We have spent somewhere around \$300,000,000., the Federal Government, and, just so long as we do not change the economy, we are going to have to spend money year after year unless the cycles change. We are going to have to take care of people on relief if they keep on with their present economy.

What we are trying to do is to work out a program that will keep the great bulk of the population out in the same area and at the same time make it unnecessary to spend each year millions of dollars to keep them from starving.

Q For how long a period did you say that \$300,000,000. has been spent?

THE PRESIDENT: In the last three or four years, 1933, '34, '35 and



'36, four years.

Let me put it this way: Admiral Grayson was lunching with me and I said, "Have you had any appeals for the Red Cross?" He said, "No."

I said, "Do you liken a drought to a fire or earthquake?" He said, "No, it is not a sudden emergency disaster of that kind. It is a long-range disaster."

I considered going out there this week but what I wanted to do was to get this program actually under way. It will take another three or four weeks before it is under way.

The chief need will come, of course, in the winter and what we are working at now is to give these people work and to provide for fall planting and to provide for taking care of their cattle. It is a program that will take a month or six weeks to get under way.

That is why I am planning sometime in August to go out to this northwest dust bowl to look over the situation and see how these plans now adopted are working out, to take a look-see trip to see how it is going, because it is a very important national question.

If this drought area spreads or is allowed to spread, it will necessarily move around. It will move east and south into Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin, and we have to stop it from coming east and south and west.

Q Mr. President, what states do we understand you will visit, personally visit?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, probably the Dakotas and possibly Minnesota.



Q Any political speeches on this trip?

THE PRESIDENT: No, certainly not.

Q Any historical speeches?

THE PRESIDENT: I might make one because the Dakota territories -- the Dakotas rather -- are having their Seventy-fifth Anniversary Diamond Jubilee Celebration of the Dakota Territory.

Q Any agricultural speeches?

THE PRESIDENT: No, certainly not.

Q Mr. President, will you make any stops en route?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe so. I may look at some of the Federal Works out there while I am out there. This is too serious a thing to get it mixed up in politics.

Q There have been reports that the drought has been so serious, so extensive, that it is now a menace to the Nation's food supply.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that is not so. Of course we cannot give any final figures on surplus, but there is enough carryover to be certain of food next year. It will probably be around six hundred million bushels of wheat.

Q Surplus?

THE PRESIDENT: That is total crop. The consumption of the country is running around six hundred and twenty-five and we have a carryover of a hundred and fifty, so you see there is no danger of starving. The wheat estimate should be out shortly.

Q Have you any idea when you will start that trip, whether it will be the first or the latter part of August?

THE PRESIDENT: From the middle to the end of August, the latter half. That, of course, depends a little bit on conditions in the meantime.



Q Will you go to the Coast, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q How many days will you take?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea. I am going out for a "look-see."

I probably will not decide until two or three days before I leave.

Q Tell us about Farley's conversation.

THE PRESIDENT: George (Mr. Durno) can hardly contain himself. I have forgotten who it was -- I guess it was Russ Young -- guessed right yesterday. Jim is taking a leave of absence from the first of August on, without pay. It goes without saying that the reason he is staying until the first of August is that he wants to clear up all of the end-of-the-year financial -- what do they call the statements they put out every year?

Q Surplus?

THE PRESIDENT: Surplus is right.

Q How long a leave?

THE PRESIDENT: Until after election.

Q Who will take his place?

THE PRESIDENT: Bill Howes will act in his place.

Q Mr. President, have you written a letter to the Department heads suggesting that a reserve be set up in the future out of regular appropriations?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That is a thing that I am making a little stronger this year than last. This is to all department heads, independent agencies, etc., asking them during this fiscal year, in preparing their apportionments of the appropriated funds, instead of dividing them into twelfths, which is the normal way



of doing it -- this is not down there in the letter but in effect it means this -- to divide it up with a surplus left over in the hope that they won't use all of the appropriation. The idea is to carry out what I did in Albany for four years and it works pretty well.

In the spring of the year, as you all know, in running any Government department you find in a given item that you have so many dollars left over, say on the first of June, and your tendency is to try to devise ways and means of spending that balance during the month of June, otherwise it reverts to the Treasury. What I am trying to get them to do now is to divide up their money so that they do not divide the whole of it but do have some kitty left over and then in the spring of the year I will issue an order to show cause as to why the kitty should be spent, thereby returning to the Treasury, out of these appropriations, as much as we possibly can. In other words, save the saving instead of spending it at the last minute.

Q How much saving do you expect?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any idea.

Q No figures at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No. And then, at the same time, the Director of the Budget sent out another one in regard to the 1938 estimates which have to come in this fall asking them whether it is possible to bring the amount below the corresponding appropriation for the fiscal year 1937.

Q Have you asked that of the Director of the Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: The Budget Director has asked all agencies to try to



make them lower for the fiscal year 1938 than the actual appropriations for the fiscal year 1937 .

Q Mr. President, did you suggest any percentage?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Can we get a copy of the letter?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Steve (Mr. Early), will you stick it up on the board?

Q How much of a surplus did the departments turn in last year under this setup?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't got those figures. They were fairly large.

MR. EARLY: They were announced by the Treasury.

Q Do you have any plans for Quoddy after the present money has run out?

THE PRESIDENT: Only that I am working very hard in the case of Quoddy and the Florida Ship Canal to use the existing plant so that it won't lay idle.

Q The existing plant?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the existing plant. In the case of the Florida Ship Canal we are negotiating with the University of Florida for the use of the buildings down there for -- I think they call it an Extension Service Course.

Q That would be a short-term lease?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Does that mean that you are abandoning the Ship Canal?

THE PRESIDENT: Have to. The same way with Quoddy.

Q How about Quoddy? Do you think you can use the buildings up there?



THE PRESIDENT: I cannot tell you yet, but I am working very hard to find a useful occupation for the buildings.

Q We will probably have to rent them.

THE PRESIDENT: There is a very good hotel in Eastport.

Q I did not see one.

Q Do you mean the Quoddy power project is abandoned?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot devote any money to it. How can I? I don't know.

Q Will Mr. Farley be able to accept contributions from office holders under the law, if he resigns?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I should not think so. Do you mean, can he, as Postmaster General, receive --

Q (interposing) If he retains his title as Postmaster General on leave, can he receive contributions under the law?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not as good a lawyer as you are.

Q I mean about asking contributions from office holders.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; you had better ask him.

Q What progress is being made on selecting McCarl's successor?

THE PRESIDENT: None.

Q Has Mr. Howes' status changed? Does he become Acting Postmaster General?

THE PRESIDENT: He does.

Q Does he take the salary of the Postmaster General?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask the Comptroller General. I don't know.

MR. EARLY: Bill Howes will get his own salary.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Howes will get his regular salary.



Q Doesn't he move up as First Assistant?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Does your northwestern trip affect the Campobello trip?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.



## CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #307,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
July 10, 1936, 10.30 A.M.

Q We have a bridegroom in our midst. Tommy Edmonds went and got married ten days ago.

THE PRESIDENT: Never told me about it. I am very happy to hear about it.

Q (Mr. Edmonds) Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Are you going, Charles?

Q (Mr. Hurd) Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Number one, there is no news on appointments and there won't be any until I get back.

Q In that connection, isn't it required that you appoint within thirty days this Maritime Commission?

MR. EARLY: It is not required.

THE PRESIDENT: Number two, on the drought: You have had most of this before, but this is this morning's summary. We have authorized for the five Northwestern states, Minnesota, the Dakotas, Montana and Wyoming, a total of 55,000 WPA jobs. Up <sup>to</sup> this morning there were 16,500 at work in that area. In the Southern and Southwestern states 20,000 additional jobs were authorized.

Q Is that Western or Southwestern?

THE PRESIDENT: Southern and Southwestern. Southern means certain portions of North and South Carolina, as I remember it, speaking from memory, Tennessee and Kentucky, and the Southwestern area is, principally, Eastern Oklahoma and Northwestern Arkansas. I think I am right on that.



We are told that North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota and Wyoming are also giving direct relief grants out of state funds. Rural Resettlement is making loans to small cattle owners for movement of cattle, the idea being to aid the small cattle owner to keep the title. The larger ranchers will be aided through arrangements to be set up today, through loans for the purpose of moving cattle.

The U. S. Children's Bureau has sent representatives into these areas to investigate the special needs of children and mothers.

We are also watching the water supply and making arrangements to move families, where the water gives out, into other areas. The Public Health Service is looking after the problem of contamination of water and is in general touch with situations affecting the health of the people.

On the weather report, there have been a few light showers over the worst part of the drought area and quite a heavy rain at Devil's Lake. However, those rains have not changed the situation materially and the temperature continues to be extremely high. Incidentally, that is not the only part of the country.

Resettlement, in addition to the loans, is making grants to some of those farm families. It is proceeding satisfactorily and, as you know, yesterday they declared a moratorium of one year on all loans of the Government in specified drought areas on a specific showing of lack of cash resources by the applicant.

Today the Resettlement Administration will declare nine additional counties in Minnesota in the drought area which, added to those originally designated, makes a total of 277 counties in the



various states affected.

We have had reports from Iowa. The corn crops seem to be in pretty bad shape -- burning up.

The number of farms in the counties in the area -- one figure says 277 counties -- oh, yes, in the 268 counties before the nine that were added to it -- is 570,000 farms, and the number of strictly farm population of those counties is 2,718,000.

Q Is that Northwest or all the area?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is only the Northwest. Of course that does not mean that every one of the 570,000 farm families have to be helped. That is the total number of farms in there and the total number of population.

Q This 55,000, is that in addition to the figure announced several days ago?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that is included in it.

Q That is a total of 75,000 jobs for the whole area, 55,000 in the Northwest and 20,000 in the South and Southwest?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Have you any figures on how many have gone to work in the South and Southwest?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

I don't think there is any news I know of. I have signed the leave orders under that new Act of Congress and you had better read them over because they are highly technical. The Executive Order itself runs to seven pages and then the regulations run to another seven pages.

Q Will you leave that with Mr. Early?



THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Did you discuss the steel situation with Green or Lewis?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Did you discuss this situation which has developed within the Federation of Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you made arrangements for the starting of the public works program -- for an Executive Order that makes this money available for Mr. Ickes?

THE PRESIDENT: We started on bridges. General Hackett was in yesterday with a large list of projects which, however, had to be checked back to find out, out of a grant to any municipality, how many people would be taken off the relief rolls. It will probably be another week before the first batch of those projects are approved.

Q That is being checked with local relief rolls as to the municipalities involved?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. In other words, the objective -- so you will all get this clear about the Public Works program -- I suppose the simplest way to put it is that we have cut down the number of people on the relief rolls in the last four or five months. However, we still have on the relief rolls more people than can be taken care of through the fiscal year with \$1,425,000,000., which is all the appropriation we have got. Therefore, we are trying to use the Public Works money, as far as we possibly can, to take people off the relief rolls, and the practical way of working it out will be somewhat along this line: Let us say that the city of X wants to build a new sewer or water supply system costing



a million dollars. They either finance 55% of it themselves through doing their own borrowing, or they borrow it from us, whichever is most advantageous to them. Then the other 45% is what we call a grant. Now what we are trying to do at the present time is to check up with the municipal authorities and ask them, out of this 45%, or in this particular case \$450,000., out of that how many people would they take off the work relief rolls? The more people they take off the relief rolls with this grant, the better chance they have of getting their project approved. In other words, if out of this P.W.A. money we can take several hundred thousand people off the relief rolls, it means there is just that much more chance of having the \$1,425,000,000. appropriated for relief last through the year.

Then, of course, added to that is the other hope we have expressed, that industry will more and more take people off relief rolls during the course of the year.

Q What money is the Public Works Administration going to use for those loans and grants if it does not come out of the \$1,425,000,000.?

THE PRESIDENT: They can get it from the revolving grant.

Q They haven't an awful lot there.

THE PRESIDENT: It is a terribly complicated thing -- algebra. In other words, if they get \$300,000,000. from Jones, they can loan, roughly, half of it and grant, roughly, half of it. As to the loan part, they can resell the bonds and again take half of that for loan and half for grant. Then they resell the loan part again and so on, ad infinitum. That is the theory of it.

Q How many projects did Colonel Hackett bring in?



THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. There it is (pointing to large stack).

Q Do you know the amount of money involved?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, this preliminary list is fifty million dollars.

Q Does that take into account the 45% grant, or is that the total?

THE PRESIDENT: The total.

Q Is there any per-man cost yardstick, Mr. President? That is, do you have any figure in mind --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Approximately what is being paid at the present time. It depends a good deal on the locality and also a great deal on the nature of the work.

Q Mr. President, how long do you expect it will take to check up on the employment producing capacity of these projects?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't catch your question.

Q The employment producing capacity of these projects? You know --

THE PRESIDENT: It depends a little on the character. It is an awfully difficult thing to guess. We are going to try to get the bulk of them under way this fall.

Of course, on P.W.A., it is slower, necessarily, than W.P.A. But this list is a very good list because a great many of these, in fact the great majority, are comparatively small projects which do not take long to get people to work on. Just take this page (at random), there are twenty projects and I suppose they average about \$30,000. apiece. Now, that is a good project because on a \$30,000. project you can put people to work fast.

Q How soon will the money be released?

THE PRESIDENT: As fast as the projects are approved.

Q And how long is that?



THE PRESIDENT: That depends on what news we get from the locality on taking people off the relief rolls.

Q What is your hope on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I won't until we find out.

Q Did I understand you to say you would start approving them in a week?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Did you notice whether there are any flood control projects in that list?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not in this list.

Q I'd like to ask a question on your trip. Can you tell us what date you are going to sail and what date you figure to be back?

THE PRESIDENT: I expect to sail on Tuesday next and then I am going to -- I don't know whether it has been announced but the present plan is to go to Quebec and be there on Friday, the 31st of July.

Q Did you notice his Lordship is calling?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. When I leave Quebec that night I don't know where I am going. I have no idea.

Q Mr. Farley indicated he had talked over with you his part in the campaign. Can you give us any idea?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose probably about the time I get back from Quebec I can tell you something about August and I take it the chances are there won't be much campaigning in August. At the end of August I will tell you the plans for September.

Q Are you considering a trip to the Coast?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Have you anything to say about the labor situation?



THE PRESIDENT: In the Federation?

Q Or any other angle of it?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Was the purpose of Governor Earle's visit to you yesterday to ask you to appoint Tony Biddle Ambassador to Spain?

THE PRESIDENT: No, never mentioned it. No, we had a bit of a talk on Pennsylvania.

Q Are you going to have a similar talk on Massachusetts today?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know what we are going to talk about.

Q The Governor is in town.

THE PRESIDENT: He is due here six minutes ago.

Q Is it going to be possible for you to do anything on the shelter belt proposition?

THE PRESIDENT: They are going ahead.

Q They have very little money?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Most of the money this year is going to be put into growing young trees from seed because there is a real shortage of young trees.

Q The appropriation was for liquidating the project in the bill. As I understood it, the money was appropriated to liquidate the project during this year.

THE PRESIDENT: Did it say that?

Q That is what I understood.

Q What are you going to talk to the Governor General about?

THE PRESIDENT: What am I going to talk to him about?

Q Yes, sir.



THE PRESIDENT: Oh, lots of things. Ships and kings and sealing wax.

Q And cabbages?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Does that mean the new St. Lawrence Treaty?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Have you decided how you are going from Campobello to Quebec?

THE PRESIDENT: By rail. Depending on how things are, I will either go  
to Hyde Park or back here.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #308,  
Aboard the POTOMAC in Rockland Harbor, Maine,  
July 14, 1936, 10.30 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Gather around. I am going to tell you a fish story.

Q We will tell you one before we get off the LIBERTY.

THE PRESIDENT: Does she look all right?

Q Yes, sir; plenty of room.

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are going to have a grand time, except, of course, for the fellows from inland -- not Fred Storm. They think we are going fishing and the object is to catch fish but, of course, you know better. The object is to loaf and have a good time.

Q Will you have Henry Kannee rehearse that "loud scream"? (Laughter)

Q (Mr. Kannee) I am going to hold that against you. (Referring to John O'Donnell's story about thefts from the Nelson House rooms.)

THE PRESIDENT: Henry was the maddest white man after reading that.

He only yelled for about ten minutes. (Laughter)

I think everything is all quiet.

Q Anything you want to say before leaving?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q Do you have anything to add to the action down in Washington on the payments on the railroad retirement fund?

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't Mac (Mr. McIntyre) give you the memo?

MR. MCINTYRE: It was released in Washington the same day.

THE PRESIDENT: That was going to be the basis of what I was going to tell you.

Q That covered everything?



THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Will you visit the Quoddy development?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea of where I am going or when, except to work to the eastward.

Q Have you anything to say on Quoddy?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q (Mr. Trohan) I haven't got that commission yet.

THE PRESIDENT: It's all right.

MR. MCINTYRE: He is the Katzenjammer Kid.

THE PRESIDENT: Walter is going to get his commission. I am going to radio for one. It won't necessarily be on parchment though.

Q (Mr. Trohan) You promised parchment. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: He is growing up and especially since going to school.

Q He can't take any notes.

THE PRESIDENT: You know, we will make a newspaperman out of Walter yet.

Q Pretty hard.

THE PRESIDENT: We have all got to help and cooperate on it.

Q Is it out of place to ask your plans when you get back to Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any plans beyond getting out of this harbor.

Q I am a little selfish because I am starting on my vacation.

THE PRESIDENT: I think we will go to Hyde Park unless something breaks in Washington but I don't know how long I will stay there; it might be over Sunday or a whole week.

Q You won't make this swing in the Connecticut Valley and through the flood region on your way back?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. MCINTYRE: They were told yesterday that you hoped as soon as



possible after your return to make a visit.

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, I hope to get to the three main flood areas -- New England, southern New York and northern Pennsylvania, Susquehanna and Delaware (Rivers) and then the upper Ohio (River).

Q That would be Columbus?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing further up than around the Pittsburgh region.

Q In the absence of Senator Young, and being delegated to do his work while he is gone, what do you think of the District of Columbia tax bill?

THE PRESIDENT: What is it?

Q I don't know. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Neither do I.

Q I was asked to ask you about it.

THE PRESIDENT: Tell Russ "Hello."

I will be going probably from either Eastport or St. Andrews straight to Quebec.

Q Overland?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, overland. It is only overnight.

Q Mr. President, have you seen anything of a pouch that required action?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen a pouch this morning. I haven't a paper left except one box.

Just to show you what this life is like, when I got to Hyde Park everything was all clear and just two days ago I was given, I think, sixteen or seventeen documents and there isn't one of them less than a hundred pages. People say, "Please take this on your trip and read it when you have nothing else to do." Most



of them are the most highly complex problems. So I have them in a large wooden box and it is a great question mark as to whether I open the box.

MR. McINTYRE: All of this is off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: No, you can use this for background.

Q There is a State Department question: Joe Smith is going to London to take over the London Bureau. And, Mr. President, would it be remiss if I were to assume that an agreement has gone forward to the Irish Free State? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I love it.

Q Would you be willing to disclose what your conference was with Governor Brann? I am from Maine.

THE PRESIDENT: We just talked about everything there was.

Q No politics?

THE PRESIDENT: No. One of the things we talked about was cooperatives.

Q They have some of them up here in marketing some of their crops.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about it.

Q I think they market the potato crop through cooperatives.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there has been much done about it.

Q It has been done in a very limited manner.

THE PRESIDENT: The general thought is that they cannot be imposed from the top; they have to grow from the bottom. More and more people are talking about them because they seem perfectly practical if started from the bottom.

Q Have you received any last minute reports from the drought area, from Dr. Tugwell?

THE PRESIDENT: I have had nothing this morning. I heard last night



there were a few scattered loans but not enough.

Q Charlie West have any official business?

THE PRESIDENT: No; just stopped on the way through.

Q Any chance you will confer with Montague Norman? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think I will confer with anybody.

Q Will this be the only place you will stop except when you leave for Canada?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Your conversations with Lord Tweedsmuir, any idea of what the subjects will be?

Q Can we borrow some books from the ship's library?

THE PRESIDENT: We ought to, you know. We ought to do it.

Q Henry is going to spend the next two weeks reading Blackstone.

That is a fishhook story.

THE PRESIDENT: Perhaps if he were to put a line overboard and troll he might pick up something.

Q Did you hear about the police in Poughkeepsie?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q They fingerprinted one of the victim's pocketbooks and the only prints were those of the policeman.

THE PRESIDENT: Perfectly lovely; I love it.

Q They hunted for footprints and they found seven strange ones all of which belonged to the Western Union telegraph boys.

Q Two were from the tap room.

Q I hope you have a pleasant cruise.

THE PRESIDENT: I will see you this afternoon from the distance. You report the first casualty to me when we get into rough weather.



Fred keeps the log.

Q He will get sick.

THE PRESIDENT: Then you keep it. (Laughter)

MR. TROHAN: Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #309,  
Herring Beach, Campobello Island, N. B.,  
July 29, 1936, about 4.00 P.M.

Q (Mr. Storm) Have you had any reports from Ambassador Bowers in Spain within the last twenty-four hours?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing this morning. You have it all in the papers in the statement which the Secretary of State gave out.

Q Is he returning to this country?

THE PRESIDENT: He was planning to come back but I do not believe he will in the midst of this.

Q What are your plans after you leave Quebec? Are you going to the Connecticut Valley?

THE PRESIDENT: Cannot answer that without Mac. I am going to detrain somewhere up in Vermont near Winooskie Dam that the CCC Vermont camps have built and from there motor to Montpelier, have a talk with the Governor and all State officials and Federal officials who are in any way connected with Federal projects, and get Vermont problems in my mind. Motor from there, stop one or two places either at sites of dams or work in progress. In Hanover hope Governor of New Hampshire and people will come for same kind of conference, then get on the train and go down to Springfield for conference with all Massachusetts officials in relation to the Massachusetts end of it.

Q Will that include Governor Curley?

THE PRESIDENT: Include all State officials.

Get to Hyde Park late Saturday night. Will not get off train in Springfield -- get there about 5.30 for conference, no work to



see in Springfield in way of flood control. Get to Hyde Park 10.30 or 11.

Q How long do you plan to stay at Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: Do not know; something less than a week, then go back to Washington. Beyond that nothing definite.

Q We haven't got any comment on Governor Landon's acceptance speech.

THE PRESIDENT: Off the record, if it would stay off the record, I might. But I will tell you what I told Mac -- the reception was poor! As a matter of fact the reception was poor.

Q Have you given any consideration of campaign swing to coast in early September?

THE PRESIDENT: Have nothing planned except what I talked about before.

Later in August will go to Southern New York and Northern Pennsylvania flood areas, also Western Pennsylvania and Ohio flood areas. Do not know whether it will be the same trip or two different trips.

Q What plans have been submitted to you of work already done on Quoddy Village?

THE PRESIDENT: Cannot tell you now -- bound to be vague, can not give anything concrete. If any of you haven't seen it, go and see it.

The whole conception of it in the beginning was based on the simple fact that the use of power both in Canada and in the United States is increasing at the rate, let us say roughly, of ten to fifteen percent every year, and we think that it is going to continue to increase. Therefore, there can be more power developed of all kinds, coal, hydroelectric, and if we can find a new method, so much the better. This Passamaquoddy thought was



originated in 1921 when the Severn River in England was being considered for tidal power development, and on the coast of France, where they have forty-foot tides. In 1921 I talked with Owen Young of the General Electric about the possibilities of the Bay of Fundy. He was much interested and they made a preliminary survey -- rough survey. They found it was of interest and well worth while studying, but that the demand for power at that time did not justify anything further.

In 1926 or '27 Cooper came along with his survey, which was financed by General Electric, Aluminum Company of America and the Westinghouse. They found his plans were practical, but again there was the matter of demand. So, in '33 we had our first study made and they assured us that it was a good proposition. Government engineers held it entirely feasible. At that time it did not seem feasible to talk to Canada in regard to joining -- all too poor to take up program of dams across Deer Island LeTeat. We went ahead with plans of developing on our side of the line, experimentally on a smaller scale, according to the development of power that we could sell.

Even since that date the science of transmission of electricity has grown by leaps and bounds; private companies, like G. E. and Westinghouse, are working on direct current instead of alternating, which means much lower cost of production and much lower loss of power. If it succeeds as they think it will, that tidal power from the Bay of Fundy, both American and Canadian side, could be transmitted down New York areas. In other words, free power both ways across the boundary. We will come to it.



Q Will you talk about this in Quebec?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, without doubt, if Friday is a long enough day.

As to the next step, the first thing, when it is thoroughly understood that this is a useful experiment, is to put it through on a small preliminary scale, using relief money which would have to be used in any case. We have got to take care of these people. We have had them on road building and schoolhouses. Money has got to be spent, as approximately 5000 people are on relief in Eastern Maine.

You can make it clear that whether something is done by the next Congress or not these people who have been on the Quoddy project from relief rolls are going to remain on relief rolls doing something else. Obviously they have to.

As to what is going to be done with those buildings, that will be decided in the course of the next week. They will be usefully employed.

Q Did Harry Hopkins have any ideas?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we have been talking. Trying to get the best possible ideas.

Q Can you allocate any of the \$1,425,000,000 to carry further this work?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I made that clear dozens of times.

Q Where are you to get the money?

THE PRESIDENT: I will use the buildings for something. Can not carry on the project without an Act of Congress.

Q Do you plan to make any inspection through the Quoddy Village?

THE PRESIDENT: I may go over on the Potomac; I can see almost everything



there is from the water.

Q Where does the Dust Bowl fit in?

THE PRESIDENT: Somewhere around the end of August.

Q Would you tell us anything about your conversation with General  
[Markham?]  
Martin?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't said more than how-do-you-do to him.

Q Anything in the line of politics, for this is a campaign year,  
you know.

THE PRESIDENT: Is this the year, Fred? I have forgotten that.

Q Are you going to listen to Colonel Knox Saturday night?

THE PRESIDENT: I will be on the train.

Q Is there anything to the story around here that you might discuss  
with Lord Tweedsmuir about making Eastport a free port of entry?

THE PRESIDENT: New one on me.

Q Have you talked with the Prime Minister of New Brunswick about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Passamaquoddy is Passamaquoddy, and includes both sides  
of the line. Off the record, wouldn't it be nice to have free  
ports on both sides? Quoddy is just one of those dreams of the  
future. Either country having extra power could send it without  
any duty. Seems to be one of the last things in the world to  
put duty on.

Q In your talk with the Prime Minister, will that embrace a proposition  
of Canada going into the proposal?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the first thing that should be done is experi-  
menting in first tidal power in the world. Seems to be worth  
while trying, and it will be the largest in the world. It was a  
very good project in view of the fact that people were on relief.



There is one other factor which we much consider. When I was a little boy we used to have three steamers a week to Lubec, Eastport and St. John. Now you don't see any, showing the economic condition of Eastern Maine. Anything that can be done to raise up economic status is pretty good; otherwise we will have to look forward to relief for many years to come.

Q Joe Kennedy is writing a book on what is going to happen to children under Roosevelt.

THE PRESIDENT: Very good; he has nine children and should qualify.

Q (Mr. Hurd) Is there anything to be said on St. Lawrence Waterways when you talk in Quebec?

THE PRESIDENT: I imagine Mackenzie King and I will mention it.  
Just pure guesswork.

Q Do you expect to see Montague Norman?

THE PRESIDENT: No.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #310,  
Atop Wrightsville Dam, Vermont,  
August 1, 1936, about 11.00 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Where is the Washington Press?

Q Right here, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: This Dam was finished before this spring's flood, and the water came up to within eight feet of the top, just below where we are. It actually demonstrates what we are after.

GENERAL MARKHAM: Yes, and the people up here all concede that these completed dams paid for themselves in the damage they prevented in this last flood.

Q That was this spring?

GENERAL MARKHAM: March, 1936.

Q How much did this Dam cost?

GENERAL MARKHAM: About a million or a million two hundred thousand dollars. It was built entirely by the CCC Corps under the supervision of the Engineering Department and in cooperation with the State of Vermont.

THE PRESIDENT: In the last flood they only used 73% of the capacity of the reservoir. They had 27% leeway on this particular flood.

Q When was this Dam started?

GENERAL MARKHAM: In 1933 and was completed October 1, 1935.

THE PRESIDENT: The State paid for the land and the Federal Government paid for the work.

GENERAL MARKHAM: The State assumed all land damages. Any damages or claims were handled by the State. The Federal Government paid for the construction.



THE PRESIDENT: Very excellent illustration of cooperation between the State and the Federal Government.

GENERAL MARKHAM: The Government has received splendid cooperation from the State of Vermont in this project.

Q The last flood was 1928?

GENERAL MARKHAM: November 4, 1927. It was the first in a hundred years of experience.

THE PRESIDENT: There was another flood between 1927 and 1936, a small flood.

GOVERNOR SMITH: Oh, yes; in 1931.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

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CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #311,  
Aboard Presidential Special Train, en route  
to Springfield, Massachusetts, from  
Hanover, New Hampshire,  
August 1, 1936.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, were you duly impressed this morning?

Q I am impressed the swell way they have gone along with the dams.

THE PRESIDENT: Two finished and one half finished.

Q The first you visited half finished?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and the other is finished, and there is another one which you did not see that they have finished. On the present plans they have five more in Vermont and two in New Hampshire. Of course further progress is dependent entirely on state legislation because, under the new Act, each state has to provide its own real estate. They have had, as I understand it -- you people from Boston know more about this than I do -- I think at least four states have appointed their members of the Interstate Compact Commission. The only meeting I have heard of was between New Hampshire and Massachusetts over the Merrimac Basin, but the Governor of Vermont, Governor Smith, was very optimistic about it. The principal objective of the Interstate Compact will be the allocation of the cost of land between the several states. In other words, it is the same old story. Eight dams out of the ten built in Vermont are for the benefit, not only of Vermont but of Massachusetts and Connecticut and New Hampshire. They have to decide on the allocation of cost of land in the Connecticut Basin. Then, when that is done, as I understand it, they have got to go to their State Legislatures for



approval of the Compact and then they have to go to Washington for approval down there. There probably won't be any trouble on that. Then, having done that, they have to get the appropriations through their State Legislatures to go ahead and buy the land. The Federal Government thereupon, having gotten the land, will probably go ahead on the same basis we are proceeding now, which is to use the CCC Camps on all the larger dams and possibly the WPA on some of the smaller dams, but probably nothing but CCC on the ten big projects.

The next step is really up to the four states concerned in the Connecticut Valley.

Q Will Connecticut be represented this afternoon at Springfield?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not this trip. You see, I couldn't put in three states in one day, but I am going over to Connecticut later, going to drive over.

MR. McINTYRE: There is a possibility that Governor Cross may be at Springfield.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is one phase of it; that is the reservoir phase of it.

In the meantime, between now and the time those legislatures act -- in other words, between now and the next spring -- we can probably find enough money to do a small number, I suppose not more than four or five, of W.P.A. projects under the Army Engineers' supervision for the cleaning out of some of these stream beds in those places where the stream bed is owned by the township or the municipality and where land acquisition -- new land acquisition -- is not involved.



I asked, both in Montpelier and in New Hampshire, about what the states were doing in regard to what I call "upstream engineering"; in other words, the putting back of steep upland pastures into trees and putting the lower agricultural sloping land into pastures to prevent or to slow up run-off. I was, frankly, a little disappointed because apparently neither state is spending very much or doing very much towards reforestation. Vermont is spending some money, but is spending it mostly for recreational parks and not for stopping run-off on the steep slopes. I think there is a real chance for both Vermont and New Hampshire to do a great deal more to retard run-off.

Then the W.P.A. is doing a great deal of work in both Vermont and New Hampshire on the country farm-to-market roads, repairing the damages caused by the floods of this past spring and putting in new bridges. The P.W.A. projects are well past the peak in both states and a few new projects were approved in that list of P.W.A. projects that I approved the other day when I was on the cruise. I don't know whether or not they have been released from Washington.

Q They were listed in that Boston paper the other day.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, on these P.W.A. projects we are being a great deal more hardboiled than we were before -- not on the 45%-55%, because the percentage remains the same -- but we are being more hardboiled in regard to the use of the Federal Government's 45% for the employment of people on the relief rolls. I asked about it in Vermont and was told that the P.W.A. projects there take 50% of their labor from the relief rolls but in New



Hampshire it is about 35% which, of course, is too low a percentage. That is why, as we add to the P.W.A. projects, we are going to insist a great deal more firmly than in the past on a high percentage of labor coming from work relief rolls.

I don't think there was anything else we talked about particularly except, especially in Vermont, there seems to be very good cooperation between the State and Federal authorities.

Q Are you going to take up anything in particular with Ambassador Bullitt?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen him for some time. I asked him to join up and ride down with us -- he lives right around here.

The only thing I talked about at all was H.O.L.C. and the State people in both Vermont and New Hampshire stressed not only the saving of the homes through H.O.L.C. but also the saving of the banks through H.O.L.C. It has been instrumental in pulling out and getting on their feet a very large number of the smaller country banks whose investments through this section are in a very large part in real estate mortgages.

Q Do you get that same report from other sections of the country?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, very much.

Q There must be something to that. All of your conferees today were largely Republicans.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, very largely.

Q Was there any discussion with these governors about straight relief?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I asked a question, both in Montpelier (Vermont) and down here with the New Hampshire people, as to the relief rolls and, according to their statements, the thing is going,



on the whole, very well.

I don't know about New Hampshire -- I didn't ask there -- but in Vermont the Town Board of Selectmen is taking care of, in each town, approximately the same number of people as they used to take care of -- of what you and I knew as the "town poor list" and, of course, if they do that it means that the total number that has to be taken care of out of Federal funds is cut materially. They think, on the whole, that that part has been taken care of very well.

The result is that because the town list is made up, as it always was in the old days, of people who are not as able to work as other people -- people who are feeble-minded, etc., -- the Federal lists are nearly all, a larger percentage than any place I heard of, composed of able-bodied men. In other words, the town is taking care of the people who should be on the poor list and as a result our list is composed of able-bodied people.

The total number of people has been cut from the peak about 50% on the Federal list in Vermont.

Q Did any of these governors give you a figure in dollars of how much their flood control program would cost?

THE PRESIDENT: No, but General Markham said that on these additional seven projects, of which three are under way, the total for real estate, and so forth, would cost the states only about six million dollars which, of course, is a very low figure and a small percentage of the total cost. That is why I hope they will be able to come to some agreement as to how that cost will be apportioned.

Q Do you recall what the Federal Government's figure would be, approx-



imately?

THE PRESIDENT: They have made preliminary estimates. You had better ask General Markham for the exact figures.

Q These would be appropriations to be made by Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, but there is no use until the states are ready to shoot. Of course the general picture, as I see it in the Connecticut Basin, is that we have a perfectly definite, perfectly simple flood control program. For example, we saved this year, because of those two completed dams, more money in damages from the 1936 flood, than the three dams, all three together, are costing, basing our figures on the damages caused by the 1927 flood. And that is only one year's flood. That is quite significant.

Q Paid for itself in one year.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

After seeing it and going over the plan, because I know this country pretty well anyway, I think the four states involved and the Federal Government, by adopting plans that are almost a hundred per cent foolproof -- in other words, we know they will work -- if they are carried out over a period of twenty or twenty-five years the whole problem will be solved. Instead of trying to do it in one fell swoop, we can do a little bit this year and some next year and the following year, doing it primarily, as far as possible, with relief labor. There will always be a number of unemployed at different times of the year.

A program of that kind involves not only the reservoir principle, but also reforestation, soil erosion and control, and



canalization in places like Hartford -- levees.

Then Governor Bridges also mentioned the Merrimac Basin. They have three proposed reservoirs there. It is a very short river and one of the reservoirs, I think it is the one which takes in Senaby Lake, that won't cost much in point of real estate, but the other two are likely to be very much more expensive in point of real estate. I suppose it is a very highly populated valley.

What is done with the Merrimac Basin depends, of course, on a compact between New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

Q Thank you. This is very helpful indeed, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Go ahead and spread yourselves.

Q I'd rather have it in French.

THE PRESIDENT: You are an expert.

Q That speech went swell with the crowd yesterday (at Quebec).

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't it funny when the Prime Minister of Quebec

switched from English to French, how a roar of applause went up?

Q We saw King later in the Citadel and met the chap who writes King's French speeches. He said, "It is too bad we haven't Roosevelt running up here because he would carry Quebec any time."

THE PRESIDENT: It is amazing how proud they are of their French language. My Lord, some of their French is hard to understand when you get back in the back districts. They say it is the French of Moliere.

Well, I am going to get down in Connecticut a little later. I couldn't get four states into one day and I hope Governor Cross will be up here and if he isn't I will drive across from Hyde Park



part way and go over the situation from the Connecticut viewpoint.

Q I will report that. Very glad to have met you. This is the first opportunity I have had to strike anything big.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #312,  
In the Library, Hyde Park, N.Y.,  
August 4, 1936, 11.00 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Charles' (Hurd's) curl is getting more beautiful every day.

Q (Mr. Hurd) If I could just hold a little on top, I wouldn't mind the curl.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you ever know Charlie McCarthy who was my secretary during the Navy days? He had hair the color of yours when he was first with me -- just about your age. He had a part, way, way over on this side (indicating) but the part was almost on the side of his head, with this beautiful hair brushed right across his head, with a little tweak on the end of it. One day Charlie McCarthy went in swimming and I discovered he was completely bald on top. All his hair grew from here to here (indicating).

Genevieve, how are you? Welcome to our midst again.

Q (Mrs. Herrick) Thank you, kindly.

Q You seem to have quite a number of important officials.

THE PRESIDENT: Just our usual monthly conference on finances.

Q We saw Mr. Morgenthau, Mr. Bell, Mr. Tugwell and Mr. Williams. Was there anybody else?

THE PRESIDENT: A lot of people whose names I can't remember.

MR. EARLY: Aubrey Williams and Admiral Peoples.

THE PRESIDENT: A lot of expert accountants, mostly what they were.

Q What is the financial situation now, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: All right.



Q Did you discuss the drought?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Of course the drought is necessitating the spending of Federal funds in a certain number of states, slightly over the original allocations for those states. We didn't know there was going to be a drought but, on the other hand, the allocations in other parts of the country haven't run as high as we expected they would because of the pickup in employment.

Q It doesn't balance, does it?

THE PRESIDENT: It doesn't balance, of course, because the drought is still awfully serious. We talked about it yesterday. It is one thing that it is difficult for people in the East to visualize -- fields where at first the grass died and then the grasshoppers came along and ate up what was left of it, so that you haven't anything there but dirt. There is no vegetation on it. And that is true in a good many parts of the country.

Q We understood yesterday that, tentatively, your plans had been changed and that you might go to the drought area next week.

THE PRESIDENT: Tentatively, no plans have been made. Let me put it the other way around, which is no story at all. A lot of factors enter into it.

Q If you do go, will you visit Iowa and the corn belt?

THE PRESIDENT: It is entirely tentative; I don't know. The situation is changing from day to day. I can't make any plans.

Q Incidentally, some of my relatives, my family out in Iowa tell me there is a first-class drought in that corn region now. There is no need of relief because the people have bank accounts but, this year, the crops are gone.



THE PRESIDENT: And in certain other areas, like the Dakotas, things have been taken care of and we are through now, such as taking out the cattle. That has been done since about the time I left Washington. They were starting to take them out then and now they are all out.

Q Any politics on this trip, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Certainly not, and it is a very great disservice to Government, as a general proposition, to link up human misery with politics.

Q Can we quote you on that, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q It is --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It is a great disservice to the proper administration of any government to link up human misery with partisan politics.

Q Any reports from Spain, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't had any this morning. The only thing I got yesterday afternoon was what appeared in all papers -- same thing.

Q Any further Navy ships going?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q In that general connection, Mr. President, are you going to revive the European Squadron? There have been dispatches from Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea. Certainly not in connection with the present scene of trouble because practically all nations have got ships along those coasts. The ships are taking off the nationals of any country that want to go out and there is pretty good cooperation between them.



Q Mr. President, can you elaborate on Chairman Farley's statement yesterday that you had O.K'd plans for an aggressive campaign from now until the eighth of November?

THE PRESIDENT: Fred (Storm), I don't think they put it just that way.

They told me yesterday of plans for an aggressive campaign.

Q He told us you had approved those plans. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No, I was on the listening end of it; that is all.

Q He gave us the clear impression that while you were listening you apparently nodded. (Laughter).

Q Does the Federal Reserve Board have any connection with the drought or relief situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q I just wondered, Mr. Davis being a member of the Board.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, in the sense that a drought situation as widespread as this does cause a shift in demand for bank credit over a very large area. Well, just for example, in an ordinary and normal harvester year in the wheat area, all the banks of the country in all the Federal Reserve districts know that funds have to move into the wheat area to finance the harvesting of the crop. Now, of course, where you have only a half crop or a third of a crop, those movements from the other Federal Reserve districts do not take place to the same degree as they would in a normal year and the same thing is true in the corn belt. Of course, the corn belt is not going to be as large a percentage of failure, we hope, but in the next ten days or two weeks -- by the fifteenth of August -- we ought to know the final prospects on the corn crop. We don't know yet.



Q Do you expect to name the members of the Maritime Board shortly?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't done a thing about it. I will probably get down to the bottom of the wooden box in the course of the next two days.

Q Have you any other appointments coming up?

THE PRESIDENT: There will be various people coming from Washington all the time.

Q I mean appointments to Federal positions?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, George (Durno); I haven't even looked at the list.

MR. MCINTYRE: You have a good many, sir.

Q Comptroller General, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy and several Federal judges.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't looked at them at all.

Q Have you any callers this afternoon we ought to know about?

THE PRESIDENT: There will be people from Washington almost every day, and from other parts. Regular routine. In other words, I am spending the morning, every morning, as I do at the White House.

Q Are you receiving routine reports?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q And European reports?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Any new methods of relief in the drought section since you have ordered all this work done?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. There haven't been any new methods suggested.

Q There were reports from Washington yesterday that the Government



was considering lowering the tariff on wheat and corn?

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't the Secretary of Agriculture say anything on that?

Q He said it was not discussed yesterday.

Q When will the sailors bring the boat back to Boston?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. The kids left the other day and we haven't heard a peep from them. We don't know where they are.

Q Probably spanking the jib boom.

Q The crowd (from Washington) just left. We are the only ones in this morning, I take it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q To put a personal note into this Conference, every one up here found a wife waiting for him and we are wondering about our personal arrangements. Do you think there is any possibility of coming back here from Washington after your stay there?

THE PRESIDENT: I will tell you off the record. George Dern is really sick; really awfully ill and we don't know his condition for the next two or three days. So, I am keeping things in more or less abeyance until we know something about poor old George. That is the first consideration.

The other relates to whether I would shift and go out West a little bit earlier and come back here a little later, or whether I would carry through the original plan of spending the beginning of next week in Washington and then going out to the flood area, and then coming back here for the week of Saturday ---- getting back here the fifteenth and staying for Franklin, Junior's birthday on the seventeenth, because we are going to have all the



pictures taken on the cruise shown up here by Ross McIntire and the rest of them, including the pictures of the whiskers, et cetera. Of course, if I go out West before then, it means the elimination of the birthday party.

I ought to know, I should think, by Thursday or Friday.

Q Of course that is plenty of time. With us it is a problem of whether to check the wives in New York, pending our return, and all that sort of thing.

Q (Mrs. Herrick) Or checking the husbands. (Laughter)

Q I am sorry.

Q Is the Secretary (Dern) in the hospital?

THE PRESIDENT: Walter Reed. He has been there for some time.

MR. EARLY: Would you consider this as a suggestion? The story of Dern's illness will be broken anyway. Let the newspapermen here check with their Washington offices and then they can write a little follow-up from here, if the President approves, saying that is another contingency the President is considering in connection with his future plans. Let the story come from Washington first.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q I wonder if you would talk for a few minutes on a long-term program for preventing this drought?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't want to until I get this Committee that Morris Cooke is the head of. It is starting in a week or ten days.

MR. EARLY: They are holding meetings now.

THE PRESIDENT: They are holding meetings now but are starting about the twelfth or fifteenth of August on an automobile trip that



will take them from Texas and up through the Panhandle and Kansas and Nebraska and up to the Dakotas and Minnesota, which is the line, starting in what we call the "southern dust bowl" and ending in the "northern dust bowl." And, of course, in a period like this, the two come pretty close to tying up together so that, instead of being a "bowl" it is a strip.

That is called "The Great Plains Drought Committee" and of course they are studying it from every angle, all based on the long-term approach. I am waiting for a report from them. If I defer the trip a little I will probably meet with them somewhere out there.

And, of course, on that Committee they have the benefit of all the researches that were made by the National Resources Committee, which has everybody connected with it. It is Soil Erosion, Army Engineers, Reforestation, Upstream Engineering, et cetera and so on -- Reclamation -- and this Committee has the benefit of all those studies.

MR. EARLY: A good many of the states in the Great Plains area are appointing committees to confer with the Federal Committee.

Q Would you like to say something for the local (Poughkeepsie) papers on relaxation, etc.?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think the only thing you could put is that I had this particular visit and during the balance of the summer, when I am here I will be carrying on the normal work just as if I was in the White House. And, in the meantime, the White House is in a very much torn-up condition. I wish you could see some of the photographs of what they found when they went in under



the floors. An awfully dangerous thing -- exposed wires without any piping or anything like that.

Q May I ask if you have any opinion or anything you would like to say concerning the (Dutchess) County ticket in the next --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't think so. Of course, as you know, there is a fairly definite rule which I have always observed and that is to take part in no primary -- no local contest, no state contest, except when it comes to my own State I am interested in the State ticket and when it comes to my own Congressional district, and only in my own, I am interested in my own county and township. They are the only exceptions to the general rule of non-participation.

Q I see that there is a plate on that chair.

THE PRESIDENT: That is the only graft that the Governor of the State of New York gets. He gets the chair that he sat in for two years. This (indicating) is the first two years and that (indicating another chair) is the second two years, only Miss LeHand has lost the plate for the second two years and we think it is in Washington. We are going to have it put on when found.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #313,  
In the Study at Hyde Park, N.Y.,  
August 7, 1936, 12.00 o'clock Noon.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news. The boys got into Portsmouth last night, which is on schedule. They had a good cruise and are coming back here in a day or two.

Q Do you have any message for the meeting in Detroit today? (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, the newspapers are full, as you are well aware, of the stories of war and rumors of war, and we are wondering whether you would have anything to say at all in relation to America's foreign policy in relation to what is going on over there?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. There is no news.

MR. EARLY: You had an appointment with Van Kirk?

THE PRESIDENT: Just the same old things over again.

Q If you could repeat for us, for example, what you said down in Dallas, in your speech, that we were --

MR. EARLY: (interposing) The luncheon talk.

THE PRESIDENT: What did I say?

MR. EARLY: Some of them said it was paragraph 19 of the Russell Young School of Expression.

Q You also said it at Chicago. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news.

Q What did Mr. Ogburn (Mr. Charlton Ogburn) have up with you this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: The appointment was arranged on the third of July and I have been trying to see him ever since. We talked about the constitutional aspects of labor legislation. You know, he is



counsel and has been working on a great many of these things.

We talked about the National Labor Relations Act and a number of other acts -- the general terms and situation with respect to the cases, where they are on the court calendars, et cetera.

Q Have you heard from Washington concerning Secretary Dern's condition?

THE PRESIDENT: No. He didn't have a very good night, the night before last.

Q The picnic was a great success. Steve (Mr. Early) got two laughs out of it and had his first smile in three days. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You know, it's a good idea. Keep on taking him for a ride; he needs it.

Q Grace (Miss Tully) and Roberta (Miss Barrows) are thankful.

THE PRESIDENT: He hasn't had a ride for two months.

MR. EARLY: You are perfectly "ride", sir. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Shall I tell you about the plans a little bit?

Q Please.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course I have been doing a good deal of telephoning all around the country and it seems best, in view of all the circumstances, not bringing in George Dern because that is one of the factors -- to adhere to the original plan in regard to the Western trip. That is to leave about the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth and go straight out to the northern dust bowl area, which means, in fact, the western Dakotas. We will stay there two or three days. I want to see certain conditions at first hand because I am a great believer in getting information through the eye as well as through the ear. Out there I will meet with the



governors of those Northwestern States and discuss their situation with them and their State people and the Federal people out there.

As the thing has shaped up in the last few days, the problem, for simple understanding, divides itself into three parts. The first is the immediate relief problem, that is to say, people who need relief at the present time, which can be and is being taken care of during these weeks. The machinery has been put into operation and while they have not all been taken care of, the machinery will be pretty well organized by the time I get there.

The second phase relates to the coming winter and spring. For example, by the time snow flies out there, we have got to necessarily abandon the building of check dams, soil erosion prevention and outdoor work to a large extent on account of snow. We have got to find ways and means of carrying the relief problem through the winter months. In the same connection, we have to take care of carrying the livestock problem during the winter months. Third, you have got to take care of the seed problem for the spring. Fourth, we have got to take care of the mortgage and debt problem during the winter months. Now, that all makes the second phase.

Then the third phase is the longer-range planning which will be worked out when I confer with the Great Plains Drought Committee, which will have completed its swing from Texas up to the northern tier of states between now and the time I get there.

MR. EARLY: In connection with that Committee, through an oversight



Secretary Wallace was not named to that Committee.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, he was, but he hadn't had his official letter.

Q In that same connection, Steve (Mr. Early), have you the names of that full Committee?

MR. EARLY: You can get them right from this letter.

THE PRESIDENT: They are Secretary Wallace, John C. Page, Acting Director of the Bureau of Reclamation; Colonel Richard C. Moore, Division Engineer of the Missouri River Division of the Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army; Frederick H. Fowler, Director of the Drainage Basin Study, National Resources Committee; Rexford G. Tugwell, Administrator of the Resettlement Administration; Harry L. Hopkins, and the Chairman is Morris L. Cooke.

Now, having spent about three days up there in the Dakotas, and having conferred with the neighboring governors, I will probably then go over to Minnesota and Wisconsin and confer with Floyd Olson and Phil LaFollette.

MR. EARLY: If possible, with Floyd Olson.

THE PRESIDENT: And the Senators from those states.

Then -- I can't give you dates on this thing because that thing has to be worked out, but I will go to the south, probably to Iowa, and confer there with the governors of those states west of the Mississippi, that is to say, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Missouri.

Q Kansas? Are you going to have Mr. Landon there?

THE PRESIDENT: Why not?

Q (Mr. Storm) My lead. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Then, from there we will go east into the corn belt,



east of the Mississippi, and confer with the Governors of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky. Then, from there on, the schedule is indefinite. It depends a little on how long these, what might be called the four locations, take. The first is the Dakotas, the second is Minnesota and Wisconsin, the third is the group of states around Iowa and the fourth is the states east of the Mississippi. I don't know how long those are going to take, possibly one day or two days each.

Q When you are in the Dakotas will you confer with the Governors of Montana and Wyoming?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Any others?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q What towns will these be in?

THE PRESIDENT: No details at all.

Then, after the conference in the states east of the Mississippi, I have no present schedule except that I have to be in Charlotte, North Carolina, for an engagement that I made months ago, an engagement on the tenth of September. In other words, I may go straight from out there in the Middle West to Charlotte, or I may come back to Washington and go to Charlotte, or I may go down to the T.V.A. and Big Smokies to Charlotte. I cannot tell now which way I will get to Charlotte from that Middle Western area.

That is the tenth of September and the only other date is the eleventh of September, to address the International Power Conference in Washington. I will definitely be back in Washington



on the eleventh of September.

Q Didn't you have an engagement -- the 200th Anniversary of Harvard? [300]

THE PRESIDENT: That's the seventeenth or eighteenth.

Q What is the purpose of the visit to Charlotte?

THE PRESIDENT: It is some kind of a seven-state -- it is a non-political seven-state homecoming meeting or something like that.

Q Can you tell us, sir, about your plans next week?

THE PRESIDENT: Next week I am a little vague except this: Between now and the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth I haven't made any definite and final plans and I can't very well, except that I will be in Washington on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and probably Thursday. Then, between Thursday and Saturday it is just possible that I may go into the Pennsylvania drought (probably meant "flood") area, but I don't know. But I will probably get back to Hyde Park a week from tomorrow night -- Saturday night.

Q Just Pennsylvania flood area?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Back here Saturday night and then stay here, I think and hope, for a week. But it might be only six days. In other words, I may go to Washington the following Thursday or Friday so as to get more time on the Western trip. But I think you can park your wives with the idea of being here next Saturday.

MR. EARLY: "Check" (the wives), Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, "check." (Laughter)

Q There are objections to that word "park"; we will get them when we get back to the hotel.

Q I wonder whether the conference with the state officials is to plan for a cooperative drought program -- state and Federal -- all the



way through?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it is.

MR. EARLY: And this is a morning paper conference.

Q (Mr. Storm) George (Durno) and myself are behind the eight-ball in a big way.

THE PRESIDENT: It is a morning paper conference. File bulletins at four o'clock this afternoon.

Q Standard or daylight?

MR. EARLY: Standard.

Q I thought we settled it last night -- five o'clock daylight.

MR. EARLY: I left while the discussion was still in a liquid condition.

Q You left when it was your turn to buy. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: The only other news today is that Jim Moffett and his wife are coming to lunch.

MR. EARLY: They are here.

THE PRESIDENT: And this afternoon I am going to try to get a road up a steep hill with a good grade, and it is quite a job.

Q Have you a new car?

THE PRESIDENT: I did have one this spring.

Q That's news to us. We thought we would write a little piece on it and we all got a call back.

Q What kind is it, a Ford?

MR. EARLY: I thought so last night.

THE PRESIDENT: You can't go ahead and advertise that old boy, can you?

(Laughter)

Q You said some time ago at the White House, when we were discussing the trip to the drought area, that you might speak in connection



with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the North and South Dakota States.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard anything about it the last two months so I suppose it's off. I talked to Tom Berry on the 'phone this morning and he didn't say anything about it, so I wouldn't write anything about it because maybe they are having some kind of a gathering and maybe they aren't.

Q Only tremendous will power will keep me from filing this story until four o'clock.

Q Will there be any addresses?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course it is possible, after I have -- of course, nothing planned but it is possible that I may feel the country ought to have a picture painted to it of what drought means. I don't know.

MR. EARLY: I just wondered if it wouldn't be a good idea to talk to the newspapermen about the number of invitations from state fairs and others trying to draw gatherings?

THE PRESIDENT: Almost every state fair out there has asked me, hearing I was coming west, to come to the state fair and speak. In a good many states they have political candidates of various kinds, --  
(interposing)

MR. EARLY:/ Democratic and Republican contests --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) and things like that at the state fairs.

This not being a political trip, I am not going to any state fairs.

Q Mr. President, have all your invitations to the governors gone out as yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because I don't know my dates as yet.



MR. EARLY: We will have days on the train between departure from here or Washington before arriving in the Dakotas -- going west and working east.

THE PRESIDENT: I want to see the West first.

Q I can't imagine any of it being worse than '34.

THE PRESIDENT: They say it's worse than that in the Dakotas.

Q Because even the crab grass was dead then.

THE PRESIDENT: It was dead, but still there. This year the grasshoppers came along and removed it.

Q The worst in history.

THE PRESIDENT: By the way, somebody last night -- don't use this because I will try to get a story for you on it. You remember Frank McCoy who used to be attached to foreign missions, etc.? He said that he was talking with old man Jusserand -- he was a grand old boy and of course a great historian. Frank said that this would be worth checking, that Jusserand said to him years ago that back in the days of Louis XIV of France the Loire Valley was becoming a desert. It had been completely cut off; the soil had been just milked for years. Louis XIV around 1680, being an absolute monarch, he started to rebuild the Loire Valley. He put in pipes, he put in pasture, he put in check dams -- we call them check dams -- and prevented the running off of the water and for a period of some time, over 100 years before the French Revolution, the King of France was bringing the Loire Valley back from a state of desolation to a state of cultivation. Of course the thing worked and today it is one of the most delightful parts of France. It was done by human beings to correct the errors of



human beings.

I would like somebody to check on that. It is an awfully interesting thing.

MR. EARLY: I think we can get the State Department, through the American Embassy in Paris, to give us a fill-in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is the best way. Will you start that, Henry (Mr. Kannee)? I think it would be an interesting example to get a story on that. Of course they are awfully careful about runoff. They save every drop of water that falls from the heavens.

(Note: Following is the report from Paris:

"FRENCH REPUBLIC

"Paris, September 7, 1936

"The Under-Secretary of State

"Dear Sir:

"In a few words, the building operations ordered by Louis XIV along the course of the Loire, are comprised of the following:

"Between the Forez plain and the Roanne basin, the Loire is deeply embanked between hard rocks which the geologists term 'the carboniferous massif of Neu-lize.' In that particular locality it forms such narrow gorges, that between the years 1702 and 1706, several rocks had to be exploded by mines, so as to permit navigation beyond Roanne, in the direction of the St. Etienne collieries.

"Soon after these operations were completed, however, in the successive years of 1707, 1709 and 1711 extraordinary and unexpected inundations occurred which caused devastations such as had not been seen since 1608 throughout the course of the Loire.

"But when the memory of this last unundation, which was already a century old, had effaced itself from most peoples' minds, one began to look upon these catastrophes of 1707-1711 as unprecedented events, and the idea occurred that they might have a bearing on the building operations which had just been completed in the river bed above Roanne.



"The rocks which had been exploded in order to permit the passage of boats were, it was said, natural, veritable dams which served to retard the spreading of the inundations below Forez. Eye witnesses affirmed that these rocks, before they were done away with, had been obstructive and strong enough to cause the formation of a temporary lake in the lower part of the Forez plain.

"Persuaded by his advisors that the establishing of the 'New Navigation' was one of the causes of the disasters of 1707, 1709 and 1711, Louis ~~IV~~ ordered dams to be constructed in the gorge of Roanne, which would allow boats to pass through and which, at the same time, would help to resist the pressure of the Loire inundations as efficaciously at least, as the natural dam of rocks had, before they had been cleared out of the channel.

"Thus in 1711, the dike of Pinay, which is still in existence, was constructed. But this dike was no more successful in preventing catastrophes parallel to those of 1707-1711, than the natural rocks had been in 1608. The inundation of 1790 destroyed a quarter of Roanne; those of 1846 and 1856 devastated thousands of acres, in spite of the construction of the dike of Pinay.

"The building operations, that of erecting and consolidating the 'causeway', that is to say, the longitudinal dikes ordered by the same King, were just as ineffective in protecting the riverside country in the middle and lower sections of the course of the Loire.

"Even today the Valley of the Loire is not exempt from danger. But it does not seem that the menace of inundations has ever turned the peasants away from their exceptionally fertile soil. The abundance and the variety of its products have been extolled since the sixteenth century. The expression 'garden of France' is already evident at the time of Rabelais.")

Q In connection with this flood control trip, you aren't going to Ohio and Connecticut?

THE PRESIDENT: Connecticut later. Of course, I am not going into all those drought states or all the flood states. I won't go to Connecticut until later on. I don't know; I haven't worked the thing out. It would be only a two or three-day trip from here.

MR. EARLY: It would be an easy thing to work out of here on the Connecticut trip.



THE PRESIDENT: That would be very easy -- just a motor drive. I can get to Connecticut in an hour and a half from here.

Q It is just over the line.

THE PRESIDENT: I think everything is quiet.

MR. EARLY: Flash -- four o'clock!

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #314,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
August 11, 1936, 3.50 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't you think the boys look well?

Q (Mr. Young) They look a little pale.

THE PRESIDENT: They got all washed out. Had too much clam juice.

Q (Mr. Young) Yes, but the taproom sun didn't burn them any. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Seems quite a crowd from the length of time it takes  
(for them to come in). There isn't any news.

Q Nothing?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news. You have it all. I  
take it everybody has been behaving himself. As to those who went  
with me, I can assure you that their behaviour was a thousand per  
cent.

Q Is Dr. Morgan resigning from the head of T.V.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I heard of. Been talking about all kinds of  
plans and there was no suggestion of it.

Q Have you received anything from the Budget Bureau on the appointment  
of a committee to investigate D. C. taxes?

Q Or to study the fiscal relations?

THE PRESIDENT: I was going to ask Bell about it and I entirely forgot.  
I will try to talk to him tomorrow about it.

Q In connection with your conference with the T.V.A. Board, was a  
proposition put up to you to expand the T.V.A. activities beyond  
the present scope?

THE PRESIDENT: No; never heard of it.



Q Could you tell us what you did discuss with them?

THE PRESIDENT: Talked about progress of present dam work. Talked about the Commonwealth & Southern agreement -- extending it beyond the first of November. And we talked about various municipalities which are applicants for power and also several cases where more than one private company wants power and we talked about the shortage of power among the private companies in that area. It has got to be quite serious.

Q Mr. President, in connection with your conference yesterday with Secretary Swanson and Admiral Standley, is there anything new to be said on the re-establishment of an European Naval Squadron?

THE PRESIDENT: I will talk off the record. I can't imagine why and how any of you people get excited about that. There has never been a discussion of the establishment of an European naval squadron except in the press. The Navy Department never had any thought about it and neither did I.

Q Secretary Hull said he was not unmindful of it.

THE PRESIDENT: That's probably a polite way of telling the Press there is no story.

Q Anything you can tell us about this \$300,000,000. earmarked for P. W. A.? There seems to be a good deal of discussion in various localities that they cannot supply 100% relief labor and I wondered if there is any likelihood of modification.

THE PRESIDENT: I think I told you this at Hyde Park the other day. The objective of P.W.A. new projects is to devote that portion called "grant", which is an actual gift of Federal funds, to the amount of money that is spent on the project for the payment of



wages to people off the relief rolls. Therefore, each project must stand on its own feet. The only case where a percentage figure enters into the grant is the limitation of 45%, as a maximum, of the total cost of the project.

Now that means, in effect, this: Those projects which use a very large amount of labor, especially unskilled labor, will in all probability be able to get up to the maximum, which is 45%. Projects that require almost entirely skilled labor would get a much lower percentage because there is a very definite shortage of skilled labor now on the relief rolls.

But, we are widening the scope, widening the field from which the individual municipality may draw on its supply of labor. For instance, in the case of -- take a practical illustration of a bridge that required a number of caisson workers and there are no caisson workers in town: If they want to get a Federal -- might call it a reimbursement or grant -- we are perfectly willing to have them go 50 or 100 miles away to the nearest locality that has a caisson worker on its relief rolls. In other words, they will not be geographically limited. Our object is to use the money to take the people off the relief rolls.

Q Is the new St. Lawrence waterway treaty being drafted to meet the objections of the Canadian Government?

THE PRESIDENT: No; nothing new on it.

Q It was announced in Ottawa the night before last that one was now before the State Department and it was certain of passage before the next session of Congress.



THE PRESIDENT: That's a new one.

Q Will you tell us if this expansion of that margin will eliminate some of the situations where cities haven't received grants?

THE PRESIDENT: Depends entirely on the individual project. It is a case of the individual project, not the city.

Q Did you give any assurance to the delegation from Texas today with respect to that?

THE PRESIDENT: I told them to find out how many people they could take from the relief rolls and, if they could take them, they would be reimbursed to that extent.

Q Any limitation on the distance you can go for skilled workers?

THE PRESIDENT: I should think the practical considerations enter into it. I don't care where they come from, provided they get to work.

Q Does the provision stand that they are to get their labor from the relief rolls?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q If they do not employ people from the relief rolls --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) They pay them out of the portion put up by the municipality.

Q Does that mean 100% or 90%, or could they scale that percentage down in any case? In other words, would they have all the labor to come from the relief rolls?

THE PRESIDENT: They could employ all the labor they want out of their own money from non-relief sources.

Q That would mean 45% --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) 45% has nothing to do with it. Let me re-state it so you will all understand: The objective is, so far



as possible -- of course there will be a few exceptions on projects that were actually approved, where we have a moral obligation to go through with them -- but on 99 out of 100 the new principle will apply. Let me put it another way: The Government will reimburse the municipality for every dollar they spend by way of wages in taking people off the relief rolls. If they want to use their own money to any extent putting people not on the relief rolls to work, that is all right. We are paying them by reimbursement.

Q You are reimbursing them up to 45%?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Are there any loans to be made to take care of those municipalities that can't finance themselves?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; they will go ahead in the usual course.

Q They can't spend money that is not borrowed money.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The objective is two-fold: First of all, to help those municipalities that cannot get adequate bank credit for one reason or another. And the second is to enable municipalities that cannot get money at less than five or six per cent to get it at a more reasonable rate.

Q There is no restriction placed upon the borrowed money?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, will the P.W.A. have priority over the W.P.A. in getting people off the relief rolls where there is only a certain supply of skilled people?

THE PRESIDENT: P.W.A. has this priority, that if they go to W.P.A., they look through the card index for that particular locality and if they find X number of people available from those cards, they



are immediately to be transferred from W.P.A. to the P.W.A. project.

Q I understood those Texas people to say that they had 35,000 people on the national unemployment rolls -- not on relief -- and wanted it modified to take care of those?

THE PRESIDENT: They have 35,000 people?

Q On the national unemployment rolls.

THE PRESIDENT: What has happened to them now?

Q They are out of work.

THE PRESIDENT: The Conference of Mayors says there are 500,000 in the country.

Q Mr. President, it has been reported there have been some disputes between W.P.A. and P.W.A. over what relief labor is available. Whose word are you going to take in those cases? Is Hopkins going --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Give me a specific case.

Q There are a certain number of cases in Michigan and W.P.A. said there were no people available and P.W.A. said there were.

THE PRESIDENT: Give me the specific cases. I suppose that W.P.A. is doing its best to get these lists in such shape that the contractor or the municipality will be able to find what kind of labor it has. It is a thing that has been developing now over the past six months. In the first two years, a skilled laborer was classified as a "skilled laborer" and you couldn't tell from that whether he was a contractor or a bricklayer. Now that is being put down more specifically to tell what kind of skilled laborer he is.

Q On the question of subsistence wages and prevailing wages: There



have been a number where prevailing wages were paid whereas the regulation under W.P.A. said "subsistence wages."

THE PRESIDENT: You will find they are practically identical in almost every locality.

Q If labor was taken from W.P.A. lists, are they to be paid subsistence or prevailing wages?

THE PRESIDENT: They would be paid the prevailing wage. They would have to be. There are, of course, certain cases where the question of wage does enter into it. For example, I have had a report made to me of a case down on the Mexican Border. The subsistence wage -- that is to say, the total paid in a week for the subsistence of a relief family -- is higher than the local people can meet if they import Mexican labor, and they have complained that they cannot get people off the relief rolls at Mexican labor prices. We are studying on that because we don't propose to pay Mexican labor prices. And the same thing is true of certain portions of the northern border. They say, "We can't get the people off the relief rolls," and then we find they won't work for them at the rate they can get French Canadians to come in and work for them.

The same thing has been true in some of the canning areas where they won't take people off the relief rolls -- this was in (New) Jersey, I think -- the people won't go off the relief rolls for ninety cents a day. And so they complain, these labor contractors, that they can't get people off the relief rolls, that they won't work.

In a great many of these cases the answer is simply that



they don't want to pay a fair subsistence wage, according to the standards of living. When you come right down to the case, you find that that is the Ethiopian in the woodpile.

Q On the drought question, in view of the report that there is a food shortage, is there any likelihood you will do what was done in 1934 and that is to remove the tariffs on certain foodstuffs?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I heard of. That is the second time I was asked. I don't know who starts it.

Q Was there any particular phase of foreign affairs which prompted you at this time to make a speech on foreign affairs?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the only reason you can advance is that I haven't talked on foreign affairs since San Diego on the fourth of October, 1935. They are about due for it.

Q Has your itinerary for the trip to the Northwest been worked out?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q When do you think you are going to start?

THE PRESIDENT: I think we will start the evening of the twenty-fifth.

Q From Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: From here. We will get out there -- I have forgotten the running time but, roughly, sometime during the morning of the twenty-seventh.

Q Leave here or Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: Here.

Q Mr. President, --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Shoot.

Q Have you decided what to do with Quoddy Village yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.



Q Have there been any reports at all from the French Government with reference to the possibility of our taking part in the non-intervention pact with reference to the Spanish situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. I had seen everything up to last night; nothing then.

Q There is a dispatch from Paris saying they have been keeping close touch with the Embassy here and there is a matter --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I talked to Phillips last night and he didn't mention it.

Q When are you going to name the Maritime Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Just as soon as I can make up my mind. No prophecy.

Q How about Alcohol (Alcohol Control)?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing on Alcohol.

Q How about the "Interim Power Commission?"

THE PRESIDENT: What is the situation?

Q It was understood you were going to name a commission to negotiate on the sale of power until the legislation --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think you are right. I hadn't heard about it since I went away. We will name somebody in the next month or two to work at it during the winter. You see, we can't do anything until we get legislation and our thought was to get the proposed contracts into such shape so that when we get legislation we can sign them before the Board is actually ready.

Q Could you outline the attitude of the United States toward this non-intervention French program and what steps are to be taken toward American neutrality?

THE PRESIDENT: I said I haven't heard anything from the French



Government. On the other thing, hasn't the State Department given out something today on the sale of airplanes?

Q No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: They may have something for you.

Q Are you going to involve yourself in the various controversies over the Postmastership of West Point?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know anything about it.

Q Miss Harrington is the Postmistress of West Point and the Army is becoming involved. (Laughter)

There is considerable talk going on in the neighborhood. It seems she is eligible for reappointment without taking the examination. An examination has been called so that the presumption is that she is not going to be reappointed.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You have got me. It is all right. I will take that matter up. It sounds interesting.

Q Mr. President, did you talk to the Governor General of Canada about coast air defenses?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I can truthfully say, "No."

Q Have you an engagement with the Mayor of Philadelphia before you go west?

MR. MCINTYRE: We got a message from him at Hyde Park but no appointment has been arranged as yet.

Q Any conclusion you might have reached about T.V.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: T.V.A.? We discussed that program. The present contract goes out sometime in November and I am negotiating.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



## CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #315,

In the President's Study, Hyde Park, N.Y.,

August 18, 1936, 11.30 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I suggest in the next Administration we put up a very nice little hotel here in at the gate and then you won't have to go up and down.

Q They are liberal spenders, too. We would have to take out a license, too, for the tap room.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news today at all.

Q That's how you started the last conference. I have forgotten how many but I had to write about 2500 words.

Q Have you formally invited Governor Landon to the conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't asked anybody yet. I am starting on a scrap pad to work out dates and we are doing a lot of telephoning to find out distances and time to get from one place to another. I think I will probably have something by day after tomorrow.

Q That will include the suggestion that you take the Mississippi River --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't think there is any chance.

Q No chance, you say?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q I would like to ask a local question: Before leaving, I talked to Bell and he thought that you might be ready while up here to announce that committee to study the fiscal relations (of the District of Columbia)?

THE PRESIDENT: Bell is coming up tomorrow in the afternoon and I will talk to him about it.



Q Is there anything new you can tell us on the foreign situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, nothing, except what you have had in the papers.

It is running along the same way.

I think you can -- if I were writing the story I would say this about the Mississippi, that any thought of making at this time any very lengthy trip is probably out of the question because I feel I ought not to be too far away from base.

Q With reference to foreign affairs?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Only don't attribute that to me.

Q While on the subject, we hear some rather discouraging reports about Secretary Dern. Have you heard anything overnight?

THE PRESIDENT: A report yesterday afternoon. We checked up and he had a good day yesterday.

Q Still in serious shape?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard anything this morning. We would have heard if there was anything serious.

Q On Bell: It is very likely you would be able to announce that committee after talking with him?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Any reaction to the tax story -- also this Chautauqua speech?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we got a lot of telegrams. I think they are all favorable. I don't think there has been an unfavorable one.

Q Would you like to add anything else to the tax story we had the other day -- the one about Morgenthau's letter?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is anything more. I understand the joint committee of the Senate and House are going to meet right after Labor Day and start in their survey.



Q I notice that Roy Howard was up here. Are you going to have an exchange of letters with him?

THE PRESIDENT: No. One of the grand things was that U. P. photographer. He took a picture of the ladies sitting on the wall yesterday. He walks up to one of the ladies he did not recognize and says, "Can I have your name, please?" She said, "Mrs. Roy Howard." I almost died. I thought it was awfully nice.

We have a list (of callers) but it isn't ready yet. Kannee has to do a lot of telephoning.

Q Did you read Ernest's (Lindley's) story? Mr. Landon is coming here with a very powerful brain trust, according to Lindley. It includes a gas station operator, a local automobile dealer --

THE PRESIDENT: I think one of the loveliest things is the human interest stories being written by the representative of the New York Times.

Q Jim Haggerty?

THE PRESIDENT: A picture of Jim catching fish, et cetera. It's a scream.

Q I think Jim is a little fed up. They haven't had a real news story in weeks.

Q That's an odd thing. We will sit around here and talk and usually, somehow, a story develops. Another person will talk for hours and nothing seems to suggest itself.

THE PRESIDENT: They are up against it. And then again, a governor of a state has very little national news. I have a lot of national news, and that makes it easier. In 1932, up in Albany, before the Jimmy Walker hearing started, I tried to sell all kinds of stories about what the State was doing in the way of the use of land and



things like that and it got awfully boring.

Q Can you tell us anything concerning your plans next month?

THE PRESIDENT: Frankly, I haven't anything at all for next month except those two firm dates. I don't know whether you have used them already. One is the tenth of September, in Charlotte. That is the tenth, the Green Pastures Rally.

Q It is a Democratic Grass Roots meeting?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, my, no. It is thoroughly non-partisan. (Laughter) That is on the afternoon of the tenth of September and then, on the next day, I have two parties in Washington. You had better announce only one of them; the other one isn't definite. The definite one is the International Power Congress. The other one is that we may have a meeting of the drive for Human Needs. We are not sure of that yet.

Q Since you are talking about dates, I thought you also told us on a previous occasion that you had one for September 17th or 18th.

THE PRESIDENT: Those are the only dates I have.

Q When you go west, is it toward Pierre, South Dakota, you will head first?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Very bad town. Rapid City is very much better.

Q Will you go down through the Tennessee Valley?

THE PRESIDENT: I will go to Knoxville and through the Smokies.

I have one thing: I might go to this Charlotte meeting by way of Knoxville and the Big Smokies, which means only twelve hours out of the way. But don't announce it yet.

Q Are you going to Washington before going to Charlotte?



THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You are leaving this Sunday night?

THE PRESIDENT: This coming Sunday night and we will probably leave definitely on Tuesday night for the Dakotas.

Q (Mr. Storm) I hope I have enough money to get my dog out of hock when I get back. He has spent six weeks in the kennels so far.

THE PRESIDENT: Did Bob Kintner ever get taken care of on his loss?

Q They are beginning to suspect something. Kintner is the second one. On a trip up here some time ago Jack O'Brien got taken for a hundred dollars.

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to speak to Ogden about it.

MR. McINTYRE: Where did he lose it?

Q At the Commodore that time.

Q We went to the Rhinebeck Fair and lost some more.

MR. McINTYRE: Probably find it listed (on the expense accounts) as a contribution.

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid I am going to miss the Rhinebeck Fair this year.

Q Too bad. It has one of the best stock shows I have ever seen.

Q I want to go back and get the fourteen dollars I dropped.

Q You haven't given us a story yet.

THE PRESIDENT: It is bad today and will be all the rest of the week.

Q Anything in this conference this morning, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Will Mr. Farley be up during the week?

THE PRESIDENT: I think probably before I leave Saturday night.

Q There's the story.



THE PRESIDENT: There isn't any conference.

Q Any others of the Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: From now on it is perfectly obvious that if he has things he wants to take up with me that are too voluminous for telephoning, he will probably run up.

Q Did you read anything in the editorial about Jim's one big job?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You had better read that.

Q Isn't it likely that some of the State leaders will come down to see you?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any.

MR. McINTYRE: We haven't any appointments so far.

Q (Mr. Young) I hate to break up a nice gathering.

MR. DURNO: Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #316,  
In the President's Study, Hyde Park, N.Y.,  
August 21, 1936, 4.30 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't believe I have any news. I have seen every one who has been here.

Q Very good itinerary.

THE PRESIDENT: Good story.

MR. McINTYRE: The only thing that worried Steve (Mr. Early) was that it is as hot as the hinges of Hell.

THE PRESIDENT: Needn't worry about that.

Q Mr. President, this foreign situation looks rather alarming. Have you any reports on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing, except what I read in the morning paper.

Q Any move on the part of this country in following Great Britain in placing an embargo?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to talk about it off the record.

Q Can we use it for background?

THE PRESIDENT: No, you can't. That's the problem and I don't know what to do about it. Frankly, I don't know why the State Department shouldn't tell you a little more about that thing they discussed with you two weeks ago. You will remember that I spilled the beans on them at that time and they gave you a story. That story was true as far as it went but they didn't tell you the exact language that was used. They didn't do it because they didn't want to give the name of the company. I don't know of any reason why they shouldn't give it to you now, so I am suggesting that you shoot through a query to Washington. I think that is the most



practical way of handling it. "Can't the State Department be a little more specific in regard to the letter that was sent to an American manufacturing firm or firms?" They don't have to give up the name of the company but it is about the American shipment of munitions to Spain.

MR. MCINTYRE: Do you suggest they use this?

THE PRESIDENT: I suggest they query the State Department in Washington; I haven't got a copy of it here.

MR. MCINTYRE: Couldn't I get hold of Bill Phillips or somebody and ask him if they can't give it to us?

Q I would like to break it out of here.

MR. MCINTYRE: I frankly think it ought to come from the State Department.

THE PRESIDENT: You can't break it out from here because, not having a copy of it I can't tell you the language and it is one of those things where you have to follow the language, word for word. But it is damn good and it went out two weeks ago.

Q Anything on your callers today?

THE PRESIDENT: You have seen them all.

Q We saw Mr. Sawyer of Ohio and that is all we saw.

THE PRESIDENT: There was an English clergyman -- and that is no news.

Q What time does Jim get here?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. What time? Six o'clock?

MR. MCINTYRE: He didn't know himself.

Q How long will he stay?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. We have two or three beds ready in case they should wish to stop over but I don't know that any



of them are going to.

Q What is the nature of the conference tonight?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, just a general report; that is all.

Q Now that you have your itinerary out of the way, can you give us any indications of your campaign trip?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because there isn't any campaign trip scheduled.

Q After you come back from the West?

THE PRESIDENT: No; no schedule and I don't believe there will be any speeches scheduled until after the famous speech at Harvard on the eighteenth of September.

Q After that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there will be any after that for some time.

Q How about that pretty radio voice? Isn't it going to do a little?

THE PRESIDENT: There will be plenty of chances, but not politically.

(Laughter)

Q I said in today's paper that you would have about six. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, isn't this Charlotte gathering more or less political?

THE PRESIDENT: They assured me it is not and I assured them my speech would not be. I don't see any way of making it political.

Q What would seven states be getting together down there for?

MR. McINTYRE: It is a kind of homecoming.

THE PRESIDENT: It was planned a year ago and they have been asking me for a whole year. Bob Doughton and Bulwinkle.

Q Are you sure it is seven states or three states?

MR. McINTYRE: No; there are five, at least, Russ (Mr. Young).

Q That's a yearly event?



MR. McINTYRE: No. I think this is a special occasion. Just general get-together in the South.

Q "Green Pastures" what they call it?

MR. McINTYRE: Yes.

Q As I understand it now, there is not apt to be a political speech until October?

THE PRESIDENT: Not the way it looks now. I don't think there will be any political speech until October.

Q Have you received an acceptance?

THE PRESIDENT: When did the telegrams go out?

Q You didn't receive any formal responses yet?

MR. McINTYRE: From two or three only. Landon's would have to be forwarded, anyway.

Q He told reporters he would accept in accordance with the statement a week or two weeks ago.

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q Isn't it rather unusual to delay campaigning until October?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q On the campaign with Al Smith in '28 -- I was with him -- and he got under way in mid-August.

THE PRESIDENT: I know, but he wasn't President of the United States.

Q I know that. But I think his opponent got under way at the same time.

THE PRESIDENT: Did he?

Q Brother Durno could give you a little history.

MR. McINTYRE: You didn't get under way until September.

Q When Brother Roosevelt got under way, Brother Hoover said it was



time to get going.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't time to prepare speeches. I had an awful time getting that speech at Chautauqua ready. I sat up four nights until one o'clock in the morning and got bored to death preparing speeches.

Q Has the Maritime Commission been appointed?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q When do you expect the Commission that went abroad to study cooperatives to return?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I haven't heard.

Q I had an inquiry as to whether Charles Edison had been offered the post or was under consideration for the Assistant Secretaryship of the Navy.

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing done on any appointments.

MR. DURNO: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I was afraid last night that we were going to get queries from New York because yesterday afternoon, with Henry Wallace, I took a great many of the neighbors' children and Sisty and Buzzy across the Rip Van Winkle Bridge. We went up through the Catskills across the River and we stopped at a hot dog stand and, by gosh, there must have been 500 soldiers all sprang out of the bushes and surrounded us while we were getting hot dogs and things. I suppose somebody telephoned in to New York that the President was in the middle of the Catskill Mountains.

Q On the expense account, when it goes in next week, it will show that we followed closely behind you. (Laughter)



Q Where is the Rip Van Winkle Bridge?

THE PRESIDENT: Up at Catskill. It was opened a year ago. I had never been over it and I wanted to see it and go across and see this "Seven States View." It is called that but you can only see five. It's all right.

Q How far up the river is that?

THE PRESIDENT: About thirty miles.

Q Where did you put Henry (Sec. Wallace) on the train?

THE PRESIDENT: At Hudson.

MR. McINTYRE: Is Henry going to start out with us?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Who else will be in your party?

THE PRESIDENT: Hopkins (Mr. Harry Hopkins).

Q How about a Reclamation man?

MR. McINTYRE: One going but he has not been selected.

THE PRESIDENT: Then, of course, we meet that Great Plains Committee, which has people from all those agencies on it. We meet them out there.

Q Where?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't know yet.

Q Anybody from Ickes' office?

THE PRESIDENT: No, but he has a man out there on the Great Plains Committee.

Q Where do you plan to meet the Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Bismarck or Pierre.

Q Is Cooke the chairman of that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.



Q They are working up through there now.

MR. MCINTYRE: Yes. I wired him yesterday and told him when we would be in Bismarck.

Q What are you going to do at Mount Rushmore?

THE PRESIDENT: Spend a quiet Sunday. Then that puts us back here Saturday morning. And, of course, if it is necessary to go to Washington instead of from Indianapolis to here, I will go straight from Indianapolis to Washington. But, if things are quiet, as they are now, I will probably come here.

Q How long will you stay here? Just over the week end?

THE PRESIDENT: Just for the week end, and go back on Monday.

MR. DURNO: Thank you again, Mr. President.



## CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #317,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
August 25, 1936, 4.05 P.M.

(Senator Black was present at this Conference.)

THE PRESIDENT: Are you going along, Russ (Mr. Young)?

Q (Mr. Young) No, I am not.

THE PRESIDENT: You could.

Q (Mr. Young) George and I spent three months with Coolidge and we  
are afraid to go back.

THE PRESIDENT: Where?

Q (Mr. Young) Rapid City.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you say "Rapid City"?

Q (Mr. Young) Yes, Rapid.

Q (Miss Fleeson) What is that man doing there? (Referring to Senator Black)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, yet.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I happen to have two or three things today. In the first place, I think you probably know about the 1936 and 1937 crop production loans. We amended the Order the other day to increase the limit from \$200. to \$400. on winter wheat, which will be sufficient to take care of the winter wheat planting this fall. The farmers in the drought areas are being taken care of through three different organizations -- the emergency crop and feed loan offices, which is what they call the seed-loan thing, will loan funds for crop production purposes to those farmers who have no other source of credit and are not



clients of the Resettlement Administration. The Resettlement Administration will make loans for crop production purposes to those farmers who are being assisted by the Rural Rehabilitation Division and will make loans for pasture and forage crops throughout the drought area for farmers who need such assistance. The problem is complicated by the fact that a good deal of grain being harvested has to be fed by farmers to livestock, that grain being grain that ought to have been held for next year's crop planting, which means that we will have, in the spring of 1937, without much question, to make additional grants for the spring crops, which will be done.

Q In the spring of '37?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q It will be done?

THE PRESIDENT: It will be done.

Q By whom?

THE PRESIDENT: The Congress. I got you there.

On the employment situation, I have allotted a million, five hundred thousand dollars for the use of the U. S. Employment Service in the Department of Labor. This is to provide for the immediate checking up of and bringing down to date of the occupational classifications of workers who have been employed under the program of the Works Progress Administration and I think there will be, probably, a further general announcement to everybody on that. The easiest way to put it is that the Employment Service has been increasingly useful in providing people for private employers but they have found that the records in the individual cases have not



been satisfactory. It is to improve the individual record of the individual W.P.A. worker that this money is to be spent, so that the prospective employer will get a better picture of the man that he wants to employ. That involves, of course, what they call "re-interviews." Some of those cards are a year or a year and a half or two years old and, in the meantime, an individual may have gained a good deal of experience in trade occupation and be a much more valuable man for private employment than the card, which is out-of-date, would show.

Q Wouldn't that also offer an opportunity to check on people who don't deserve to be on the relief rolls, in connection with this report from New York?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and that seems to be properly the function of the U. S. Employment Service working in conjunction with the State Employment Service in those states that have state employment services.

Q Have you any idea of how many employees will be involved in this check-up business?

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody on the W.P.A. rolls.

Q How many?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to get the figures on that. Roughly, 2,400,000.

Q How many people employed in this work?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Regular employees of the Department of Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: You had better ask the Employment Service.

Q Has there been any time set for the completion of that?



THE PRESIDENT: Going right to it.

I am sorry to have to tell you that Ambassador Straus has been compelled to resign because of his health. He is to take a complete rest for six months and Steve has his letter to me and my letter to him.

On the question of filling his place, don't do any guessing because, as I told you all a little while ago, it is an exceedingly embarrassing thing on account of the necessity of getting what they call an "agreement" from the other side. It would be awfully difficult if an individual's name was sent in and he happened to be turned down and it was known that he had been turned down. In other words, it is always a confidential matter. You will hear about his appointment in the next two or three days.

Q I would like to ask for enlightenment about all this speculation about the recent conferences with Morgenthau about the fiscal condition of the Government, and taxes, and also the rather peculiar speculation as to the sincerity of the tax program?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course the source of the speculation as to the sincerity is obvious and needn't be mentioned again. The fact remains that the letter from the Secretary was written in good faith and meant, in plain English, what it said. No further comments on that.

However, the general picture of the finances is increasingly better. I might say that each week or each month they are definitely better than the estimates of last January and definitely better than the estimates of last June. That was one of



the things I talked to Senator Glass about when he was in here today.

Don't begin to speculate on figures because nobody has any figures. It is a simple plain fact that the tax receipts are coming in in larger volume than we had expected and that the expenditures of the Government are going out in less volume than we had expected. That is all to be said on it, one way or the other.

Q That is the subject you have been discussing with Morgenthau and Bell?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q In that connection, do you expect to submit a revised budget estimate, as you did last year?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, there will be in the course of the next week or ten days the usual checkup. That is not a budget estimate. That is an estimate of the expenditures and receipts for the current fiscal year. I think Bell will give them out in the course of the next week.

Q There has been a lot of guessing and uncertainty as to the Public Works program -- the three hundred million dollars -- on the regulations. Can you tell us what the new regulations are?

THE PRESIDENT: Just finished a conference on the next step. We are going ahead rechecking every project. This is the first step of two principles. I think I mentioned them both before. The first relates to those communities which, in good faith, held municipal elections to authorize the expenditure of city money or the issuance of bonds for a new project in expectation that P.W.A. would



furnish the grant. There are a number of communities which went through those things in good faith and we feel there is a moral obligation to carry that through.

The second category relates to those municipalities that can take, for the amount of the grant, people off the relief rolls substantially to the amount of the grant. For instance, I just went through a book and we have approved -- we didn't total the figures but I should say, offhand, this week, between three and five million dollars of projects where the grant will be spent practically in toto 85%, 90%, 95% for the payment of wages to people taken from the relief rolls. There are a number of other projects which may come into that category on a recheck. That ties in with what I have just talked about on the reclassifications of, especially, the skilled workers because a community that wants to build a schoolhouse, for instance, may not have enough first-class carpenters on the relief rolls of its own community but, by going to the Employment Service they could find the additional number of carpenters on the relief rolls of a neighboring community. And, as fast as those communities can, on a recheck, show us that they will take a substantial proportion of all the grant money to take the people from the relief rolls, these projects will go through.

Now, as I say, today we approved roughly between three and five million, which will go through.

Q Ordinarily that is on the 45% they will have to take off the relief rolls.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. For instance, on a hundred thousand dollar project



they will pay 55% and we will give them 45%.

Q Provided they spend that on wages for people?

THE PRESIDENT: For people from the relief rolls.

Q It has been figured that the total cost of labor on a public works job runs about 35%, I believe that is the figure, and therefore it would be impossible to use perhaps more than 10 or 15 per cent of the total cost for relief labor.

THE PRESIDENT: Why, if it runs 35% for labor, should it only run 10%?

Q Because that would be divided between the Federal contribution and the local contribution.

THE PRESIDENT: Why shouldn't the Federal contribution go entirely to the 35% of labor?

Q That is what I have been wondering about. I never heard it discussed from that angle.

THE PRESIDENT: After all, if they take our Federal money, which is a gift, and spend all of it for paying the wages of people on relief rolls, we don't care where the 55% that the city puts up goes to. They can spend it on concrete and steel and anything else. All we are worrying about is the labor that comes from the relief rolls.

Q You said you discussed that, as one thing, with Senator Glass.

What were the other things you talked about this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: We talked about the failure of the Congress to pass the legislation I suggested creating, in the Mint, a division for making commemorative medals instead of fifty-cent pieces.

Q Did you discuss the possibility of his making a campaign speech?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We talked about lots of other things.



Q You say there were other things besides that?

THE PRESIDENT: There were lots of them.

Q It would be interesting to know, if it is proper to ask.

THE PRESIDENT: Fred (Mr. Essary), at another time I will have to have a stenographer present. I don't remember them now. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, are you going to have the Maritime Commission for us pretty soon?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Think you will have it before you leave tonight?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q The New York papers today have you going to address the Convention in Syracuse on the 28th of September?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. The 28th of September? That is the date I am due here to watch the Gold Cup motorboat races. I don't know. I haven't thought of the 28th of September.

Q Hull was scheduled to have lunch with you today. Did you talk about --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Just about a great many things. Daily checkup.

Q Mr. President, have you given any attention yet to the personnel of the group going to Buenos Aires for the Pan-American Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: No; haven't discussed it at all. Probably won't until well on towards the end of next month.

Q It was Secretary Ickes himself who suggested that a maximum of 35% could be used for labor. Under those conditions, won't it be possible to have a 45% grant?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It depends on the project. For example, we have



given money to sewer projects where the total amount of labor was 60% of the total cost of the project. On the other hand, a steel bridge -- the cost of actual labor may not run to 20 or 22 per cent.

Q The Secretary, discussing it this week, said that the average grant under these regulations, taking in all classes, would be only a 10% grant. That, on the average, there could be no 45-55 per cent grant; that on the average it would be 10%.

THE PRESIDENT: Somebody's arithmetic is wrong on this. I think there is a misapprehension somewhere on that. There are certain projects, it is perfectly true, where our contribution might be as low as 10%; a project, for instance, where common labor was the only supply on the relief rolls in the vicinity, where there was nothing other than common labor within 500 miles and that common labor amounted to only 10% of the project. That is perfectly possible.

Q Do you feel confident that the entire three hundred million dollars can be used under these regulations?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea. I am only going ahead with it as they qualify.

Q Were the Governor of Michigan and Senator Vandenberg among those invited?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

Q Do you know when the Great Plains Drought Committee will be able to make a report on the Great Plains drought?

THE PRESIDENT: As soon as they report to me at Bismarck on Thursday.

Q Have you any comment to make on Senator Couzens' statement urging your election?



THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter)

Q Did Secretary Ickes express confidence to you today that a program could be carried under these regulations? He expressed extreme doubt last week.

THE PRESIDENT: All we can do is to go ahead with the projects as they qualify.

Q Have you taken any action on the proposal of four Senators that surplus crops be purchased to distribute in the West?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't heard of it.

Q The Senators of Florida and Texas.

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't California come into it? Weren't Hiram Johnson and McAdoo in it? It's a new one on me. I never heard of it.

Q Was Senator Dickinson one of those invited?

THE PRESIDENT: I assume so. All Senators supposed to have been invited.

Q Any specific reference to the coin thing?

THE PRESIDENT: There is only one thing that can be done in the absence of a law: If they will pay for the cost of the die and the cost of running off the medallions, the Treasury can do it without any further legislation. But, if they want a coin, they will have to get legislation in January.

Q That's right.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #318,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
September 8, 1936, 4.10 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

Q Mr. President, you had a conference recently with Mr. Willkie, of the Commonwealth & Southern, and Arkwright, of the Georgia Power Company, regarding the TVA contract which expires in November?

THE PRESIDENT: We talked about two separate things: One was a proposed conference a little bit later on in regard to the possibility in the whole TVA area of working out some kind of grid system of transmission. It is only in a very much preliminary stage, even as to conversation, but we are talking of the possibility of a grid system for the transmission of power.

The other one related to the specific contract between the Tennessee Power Company, I think, and the TVA which expires -- I have forgotten when -- the end of October or the first of November.

Q November third.

THE PRESIDENT: And we talked about the possibility, because the thing is more or less tied up in the larger question, of extending the contract temporarily until we could go into the whole thing more thoroughly.

Q Would your grid system tie in with private utilities?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

Q Was any agreement reached for extending the contracts?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I said I would take the matter up and send a memo to the Tennessee Valley Authority. I don't think I have



heard anything since then and it is about ten days ago.

Q Wasn't that the Alabama Power Company -- not the Tennessee?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you are right. It was the Alabama Power Company.

Q Do you expect to visit any part of the TVA project on this trip?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q Not even the Hiawasseee Dam?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q It is on the way to where you are going and they expect you to visit it.

THE PRESIDENT: Then I probably will.

Q (Mr. Storm) I see, Mr. President, you are studying "Waste."

THE PRESIDENT: It is well worth reading; it is an awfully interesting little book. I was reading it last night. I've got various books here, one called "Bedrock Borer" but I haven't got to that yet. This little book, "Waste," has got some significant passages in it, but I will have to read aloud. For instance, here's one --

Q (Miss Fleeson) (interposing) Is this "Waste" or "Borer"?

THE PRESIDENT: This is "Waste." (Reading) "Money comes not only out of doing more business; money comes also out of not suffering losses." This is a gem of speech. And then he (the author) talks of human waste. (Reading) "In the same way, the cost of giving a young man good health and good training is paid out of not having to lock him up in an asylum or a jail at public expense." That is something we can all remember -- one way of keeping out of jail. (Reading) "The money to pay for good things comes out of not having to pay for loss and disaster. Soil erosion losses to date are



over ten billion dollars in money values."

Of course, he is awfully low on that. In the course of 300 years, the soil erosion loss is infinitely more than ten billion dollars.

Q Who is the author?

THE PRESIDENT: David Cushman Coyle. (Reading) "When we look ahead to the future of our country we are forced to decide whether we are willing to invest money in building up the strength and security of the nation. Or shall we insist on holding tight to our money -- even though the wealth it is supposed to represent slips away from us?" It is a grand book. You ought to read it.

Q Wasn't Mr. Cushman one of the gentlemen named by Dr. Wirt?

THE PRESIDENT: Who is he?

Q (Miss Fleeson) That's right. (Laughter)

Q He is the dinner guest.

THE PRESIDENT: That's years and years ago.

Q Can you give us some of your ideas on the subject of waste?

THE PRESIDENT: There are some pretty good lines in there. We have had an experience the past ten days trying to stop waste.

Q Any of the diplomatic appointments any closer? The Under Secretary (of State) or an ambassador?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't thought of them at all. I hope I shall have that Shipping Board (Maritime Commission) going inside of a week.

Q The reports that you would hold that off until after Election are not serious?

THE PRESIDENT: No.



Q There was a report that Secretary Marvin Hunter McIntyre was going to be named to that Commission. Can you clear that up for us today?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I could say this: that he has proved to me many times that he does not know the bow from the stern of a ship and therefore he might be thoroughly valuable. However, he does know where the roll is. (Laughter)

Q I think he ought to be allowed to talk back.

Q There was a report that Marvin Hunter McIntyre might sing in the Press Club "Showboat."

THE PRESIDENT: "Showboat." That's it! That is part of his candidacy. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you discussed with the State Department the plan of bringing the American warships home from Spanish waters?

THE PRESIDENT: The OKLAHOMA is on the way home, isn't she?

Q Yes, the OKLAHOMA is on the way home.

THE PRESIDENT: That is the only thing I have heard.

Q We still have four over there?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; I haven't heard of any change.

Q Governor Landon said, after meeting you in Des Moines, that he thought you were a very fine gentleman. What do you think of him?

THE PRESIDENT: I reciprocate.

Q Have you had any further conversation with Secretary Ickes regarding PWA selections?

THE PRESIDENT: Another long list approved today. I think it is about seven million dollars.

Q Have you taken any action in the last few days concerning the defects



in battleships?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't heard a word about it.

Q These projects today and the ones before came from the old money?

THE PRESIDENT: I think some of them today came from the new money.

It depends; for instance, suppose we take a hypothetical case:

I approved the seven million today to come out of new money.

Suppose next week we canceled four millions of old allocations.

We would transfer four millions of the new money over to the old,  
the object being to use up the old money first.

Q Anything you can give us about your campaign plans?

THE PRESIDENT: Fred (Essary), I haven't the faintest idea, literally.

I have another date, the 29th of September, at Syracuse.

Q 28th or 29th?

THE PRESIDENT: 29th, and then come back here that night.

Q Starting west then, from there?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea.

Q You will make a speech at Syracuse?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Will you go to Syracuse from Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q That speech will be political, won't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. (Laughter)

Q Non-partisan? (Laughter)

Q When will the political phase of the campaign start?

THE PRESIDENT: That may be January 3rd. (Laughter)

Q January 3rd?

THE PRESIDENT: Doesn't Congress meet then?



Q It is the 4th (of January) this year.

THE PRESIDENT: Fourth; that is right. I am wrong; it is the fourth.

Q Did you read Walter Lippman's column this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Did he start this morning?

Q I am afraid he endorsed Governor Landon.

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't know he had started again. He must have had  
a good holiday, then.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I will be back Friday and we will have a party Friday  
morning and I will tell you all about the Great Smokies.

Q Ten o'clock?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.



## CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #319,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
September 11, 1936, 10.35 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: We had a grand time. Are you dry, Fred (Storm)?

Q (Mr. Storm) I only dried out about nine o'clock last night.

THE PRESIDENT: Did I get wet. My shoes were full of water. You people were lucky.

Q We got a little more ride than you did.

THE PRESIDENT: Did your car break down?

Q We ran out of gas. The gas feed line was clogged.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news at all. I know probably less than I did three days ago.

Q Maritime Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing on it. I haven't thought of it.

Q Comptroller General?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing.

Q Will that official be named before election?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I just plain haven't given thought to any of those things.

Q How about that speech of yours today?

THE PRESIDENT: Henry Kannee has got it. I am going to read it over.

I dictated it last night on the train, having nothing else to do.

I am going to read it over and put it on the mimeograph in fifteen minutes. It is a rather dull, rather technical speech.

Q In view of the withdrawal of our warships from Spanish waters, is there any possibility of a warning being issued to American



merchantmen?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know anything about it. I didn't know the warships had been withdrawn until I read it in the papers.

I don't think there is anything I have news on at all. Everything is extremely quiet. I may or may not go down the river on the POTOMAC tomorrow afternoon and come back Sunday afternoon.

Q Go from Annapolis?

THE PRESIDENT: No; probably go from here.

Q If you go down the river tomorrow, will you caution the captain of your ship to stay clear of the Press Club showboat?

THE PRESIDENT: I am taking Mac along as pilot, so talk to him.

(Laughter)

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #320,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
September 15, 1936, 4.15 P.M.

Q (Mr. Storm) Hello, Mr. President; want to buy a policy?

Q An insurance policy.

THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter) Fred, I think everything is all quiet.

You have nothing on your chest this afternoon, Senator?

Q (Mr. Young) No. They asked me to call it off early.

THE PRESIDENT: None of your children got anything on their chests?

Q (Mr. Young) Ruby (Miss Black) has something.

THE PRESIDENT: Ruby? Not going to cause any trouble?

Q (Mr. Young) Oh, no.

Q Limit it to one a person today, Russ.

Q (Mr. Young) Not that many.

THE PRESIDENT: (Speaking to Miss Black) Just saying nice things  
about you; don't worry.

Q (Miss Black) Can I quote you on that?

Q See that tie Brother McIntyre is wearing.

THE PRESIDENT: That is something. Are those the spots he got on the  
ship?

Q No; they are all in front of his eyes.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news. All quiet.

Q Can you tell us anything about the insurance conference today?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we talked about all kinds of insurance problems.

Just to give you some example, I suppose we talked about a thousand  
different insurance problems. We talked about farm mortgages and  
of the possible help that the insurance companies could be to the



Federal Government and what the Government could do for the insurance companies in land surveys. Practically every one of the insurance companies that has farm mortgages as investments, has a card on which are various facts and figures relating to the farm and, as we are going ahead in the Government work with this kind of farm survey, we thought we could be mutually helpful to each other.

Then we talked about city property and its relation to the surveys that have been made by the Federal Housing Administration of individual pieces of property. Those surveys have already been helpful to the insurance companies in their loaning of money.

We also talked about the fact that the insurance figures of the last three years showed three billion dollars increase in the total of their policies but, at the same time, the average per policy has been steadily decreasing, which seems to point out that more people are taking out policies, small policies -- in other words, that the bottom of the pillar is getting wider all the time.

I have forgotten what else we talked about. There were a thousand different things relating to insurance that we were talking about. Of course, there is nothing new in this; we have been doing it since 1933.

Q In connection with the work of the Social Security Board?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Of course they are all very much in favor of that.

There was no opposition from the insurance companies. We did talk for a minute or two about one phase that does relate to them which might be called "paid-up insurance" -- the extension of facilities for buying paid-up insurance on the part of the small fellow who



has \$25. or \$50. to spare which will enable him to buy paid-up insurance for his old age. They are going ahead with that. That might be called supplementary to the regular scale of old-age pension.

Q Was anything said regarding the solidarity of the insurance companies or the strength of the insurance policies?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because the figures speak for themselves.

Q One of the insurance presidents said that their assets increased, showing assets of \$3,000,000,000.

THE PRESIDENT: Quite a number of them gave me statements.

Q Did you make any suggestion to the heads of the insurance companies or reassure them or assure them that the Government had no intention of going into the insurance business, since there have been reports to that effect?

THE PRESIDENT: I mentioned it in a jocular way. I said that of course they knew perfectly well that the Federal Government was not in the insurance field, that that was left solely to the state governments and that we propose to continue that policy. Obviously, they knew that before.

Q (George Durno) One of the Services carried the story that one of these insurance executives said you discussed the possibility of restricting loans to \$25. an acre.

THE PRESIDENT: No; that is entirely wrong. What we did was this: that up to 1927 or 1928 -- I have forgotten which was the peak year, there were certain areas in the country where speculation in farms raised the values of farms in those areas -- this was not general, these were rare, on a limited number of areas -- raised the values



of those farms based sales prices that were too high compared with the rest of the farm land in the United States. Some insurance companies in those days did lend too much because the sales values were too high in those given years. Now they are fully conscious, just like the Farm Credit Administration is fully conscious, of the danger of a local speculative rise in real estate and, in case of any sudden boom in some particular area, the Farm Credit Administration and the insurance companies today have learned the lesson and they won't follow up the prices if they get beyond a reasonable price for that type of land.

Q Did you tell them that \$25. an acre was a reasonable price for farm land?

THE PRESIDENT: Heavens above, there may be some farm land worth \$400. an acre. How can one generalize? Good farm land around Warm Springs is worth \$10. or \$15. an acre, but a piece of irrigated land may very well be worth \$400. an acre.

MR. YOUNG: Depends on the crop produced?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on the crop produced.

Q Is there a suggestion there that the Farm Credit and other Government units make surveys to set up some sort of yardstick?

THE PRESIDENT: No; absolutely no sort of yardstick.

Q I am thinking about this cooperation you speak of between the Government and these companies.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, for instance, the Government has a lot of figures about the earning capacity of land, and so do they. Merely an interchange of information on the earning capacity of land.

Q Is that on specific land -- specific farm land or, generally, any



section?

THE PRESIDENT: All land.

Q Take a certain farm: Will they exchange certain information as to the value of a farm?

THE PRESIDENT: After all, our Farm Credit Administration loans are all open to the public. Nothing secret about them.

Q Farm Credit Administration would not loan above the reasonable value of the land?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Are you familiar with the statement Colonel Knox made about insurance policies?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what I read in the paper.

Q Was that discussed?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except in a jocular way as they went out. I told them the boys would ask them about the political phase and they could say whatever they wanted about it. That is all we said.

Q It scared them to death. None of them said anything. (Laughter)

Q Do you plan to call in leaders of lines related to insurance, such as mortgages and other fields of business?

THE PRESIDENT: I am seeing them all the time.

Q In other words, this is nothing unusual.

THE PRESIDENT: No. For instance, in the past month I have seen three different surety people from the surety group. I have seen two of the important fire insurance people in the past month. I keep seeing them all the time. I have seen a number of life insurance presidents in the past three years.

Q They didn't assert Mr. Knox's sentiments, I take it?

THE PRESIDENT: We never discussed it. The only thing I said was that



they are waiting for you outside.

Q Were the officials of the Equitable or Prudential companies invited to the conference?

THE PRESIDENT: You have the list.

MR. EARLY: No, sir; they are not on the list.

THE PRESIDENT: No; these are the only ones.

Q Can you tell us anything about your campaign plans for next month?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I can tell you as far as we have gone, and it is wholly negative. I had, quite frankly, in the last month been thinking about a trip to the Coast and I had gone so far as to get timetables out and see how many days and nights it would take. But I don't know, frankly, whether I will be able to go to the Coast or not. I want to, if I can, but I am not sure whether it will be advisable for me to be so far away from first base for four days. Now, don't say there is an European situation -- a war scare -- in this but the fact remains -- you had better use this as background -- the fact does remain that I ought not to be, at the present time, if it is a question of leaving tomorrow or next week, I probably ought not to be four days away from Washington. How things will shape up by the first of October, I don't know. I have an awful lot of things here. And, in the second place, on the general world situation, I don't know how it is going to be around the first of October. The trip was planned and may still be carried out but I have deferred a decision until I see how things are the first part of October.

Q Assuming you do not go to the Coast?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got to the next step.



Q The State Chairman in Iowa says you will probably make your farm speech in Des Moines around the 24th of October.

THE PRESIDENT: My dear fellow, Mac is getting telegrams and letters every day that I am going to speak in each one of the 3065 counties in the Nation. Mac doesn't know and neither do I.

Q Are the Maritime Commission appointments coming this week?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so..

Q Do you expect to discuss with bankers the same questions you have been taking up with insurance officials?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q At some general meeting?

THE PRESIDENT: That is more complicated than the insurance companies. There are a couple of thousand bank presidents.

Q Getting back to your campaign plans, how long do you expect to remain in Washington after you come back from Syracuse?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any plans. I do hope, before the World Series ends, to go to a game. That is the same week as the Syracuse conference.

Q Mr. President, have you any plans to visit Rio de Janeiro before --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. (Laughter) Fred (Mr. Storm), the wish on your part is father to the thought. No. I will tell you what I probably will do and that is after the 3rd of November I am going to try to get on a boat somewhere and take ten days to two weeks' holiday. But that again depends on the general world situation.

Q Either way?

THE PRESIDENT: Any way.



Q Would that be down to the South American conference?

THE PRESIDENT: No; probably the Bahamas. It may be that fishing ground we haven't gone to yet.

Q Off the coast of Mexico?

THE PRESIDENT: Fred and I haven't caught tarpon yet.

Q Have you any comments on the Maine election?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that I am a damn good guesser.

Q Can we quote that, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter) I have come to the conclusion that when I am through here I am going to syndicate myself. It is cheaper than taking a poll and more accurate than any poll. That is pretty good. I am best.

Q Let us see how good you were; how close were you?

THE PRESIDENT: I was pretty close. Let's see: There were five of them running. I was awfully close on three. I wasn't so badly off on one and I was away out on the other.

Q Which one were you out on?

THE PRESIDENT: Congressional district.

Q Will you comment on the proposal to militarize the C.C.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the only thing to say is what was said to you by Steve (Mr. Early) and that is that no change has been or will be contemplated.

Q In view of the fact that you are best as to your Party, what is your guess as to the November election?

THE PRESIDENT: I will put it down on paper beforehand and nobody else will see it.

Q Can we see it afterward?



THE PRESIDENT: All right.

Q Will you have it certified that it is the same one you wrote down?

THE PRESIDENT: Ruby (Miss Black), do you remember in 1930 we had a pool? The boys up in Albany and I, we each put -- I think it was quite a pool -- we put \$5. in the hat on what my majority would be. Mind you, they were all experts.

Q That was 1930?

THE PRESIDENT: 1930. They were all experts and I won the pool. Jim Kierney was next, but he was out 50,000.

Q (Mr. Storm) I got hooked.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, you got hooked.

Q As an expert on these things, do you approve of the odds of 5 to 3 offered by Lloyds of London on your re-election?

THE PRESIDENT: Lloyds did that? I am afraid somebody might construe that to be British support.

Q I might add, Mr. President, that they are not offering those odds unless a person can prove to their satisfaction that they have a personal interest in the election.

THE PRESIDENT: How in blazes do you do that?

Q I don't know. I guess you have to submit a sworn affidavit.

Q That is the way they are insuring them against loss.

Q Mr. President, you said you had read Colonel Knox' statement about insurance. Are you going to comment on it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The only way I can comment on it is by quoting Latin. Res ipsa loquitur.

Q He quoted you last night.

Q You indicated to the insurance men that you might recommend a change



on the reserve plan of the Security Act?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Did you give them the idea you would favor that?

THE PRESIDENT: They mentioned it themselves. They are pushing it.

Q They are pushing the reserve feature?

THE PRESIDENT: No, the additional old-age insurance.

Q I mean the huge fund that is intended to be built up under the annuity feature?

THE PRESIDENT: That wasn't mentioned.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #321,

In the President's Study, Hyde Park, N.Y.,

September 22, 1936, 12.00 Noon.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you people get soaked (at the Harvard Tercentenary ceremonies)?

Q You must have taken a lot of punishment.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh!

Q We went over to a saloon across the street and about 10,000 other people had the same idea. You really had to fight for a place at the bar.

THE PRESIDENT: I got perfectly soaked and after about an hour and a half somebody came up and offered me an umbrella. I said, "What's the use?"

I don't think there is a bit of news.

Q How about Henry Wallace?

THE PRESIDENT: Coming some time today; when, I don't know.

[Gil]

I was talking this morning with Bill Winant about a very prosaic subject. The Social Security Commission is going to need about 200,000 square feet in Washington as soon as these records begin to go out and come in. Eventually they will need about 500,000 square feet. So, I have been going over various plans to see how we could house them. We would have to house them temporarily probably in two or three different places and then, eventually, probably the cheapest thing for the Government is to build them a building. It will have to be the type of building you have to put heavy machinery in. He said an interesting thing: He said that five years ago you couldn't have run a card indexing



system which, before it gets through, will contain a card for every person in the United States. The improvement on these card sorting and classifying machines has been so great in the last five or six years that it can be done practically all by machinery. Before that it required so much manual labor that the staff required would have made it an impossible thing. The overhead would have been too great. That is rather an interesting sidelight on what has been accomplished.

Q I should think so.

Q I wonder if, offhand, you could give us an idea of how much 500,000 square feet of space would be?

THE PRESIDENT: I asked that question myself. You know, the old Interior Building has 650,000 square feet, so it is a bit smaller than the old Interior Building. It is a short block.

Q New York Avenue is diagonal there.

Q Are you going to talk crop insurance to Secretary Wallace?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q Have you made any further plans as to what you might do next month?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Have you any idea of going up to Connecticut during the next week?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I can do it this week. I will get into Connecticut some time to have a meeting on their flood problem but when, I don't know.

Q Hasn't Hartford an anniversary celebration this year?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. They had their tercentenary last year.

They may have one there; I don't know.

Q Does it still seem probable that after you have gone to Washington



and Pittsburgh and back to New York that you will get up here for another stay?

THE PRESIDENT: After the ball game I might come up here, but how long, I don't know. It might be for twenty-four hours or it might be for two days. There is so much popping in Washington that I can't be away long.

MR. McINTYRE: By the way, we won't get to Washington after Syracuse until 10.30.

Q Is that power conference on the thirtieth to be held in the morning or in the afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: I have two things that day. I have the power conference and the first meeting of the Peru-Ecuador.

Q Is that the disputes commission, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Do you plan to see Chairman Farley during the week?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; he is coming up Thursday. Quite a lot of others coming up Thursday.

Q Is that the same conference with Senators Robinson and Guffey?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. There will be quite a group; eight or ten.

MR. McINTYRE: I won't have all the names, though, until the afternoon before.

Q Do we know any more besides the three at the present time?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. There will be eight or ten or maybe twelve; I don't know.

Q What will be the purpose of the visit?

THE PRESIDENT: Political conference, Fred (Storm)? (Laughter) There you are.



MR. McINTYRE: So you can speculate on some more people who will be there -- finances, Speakers Bureau and everything else.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; that's pretty good. That is real news.

Q First one. (Laughter)

Q We all thought the bank had been bombed in Poughkeepsie. A big ten-ton truck loaded with lumber, and the rear tire let go in front of the Farmers & Merchants National Bank. It really was a terrific blast.

THE PRESIDENT: Did the lumber fall off?

Q The lumber stayed on but the truck careened to one side. Both tires went at one time.

THE PRESIDENT: Do they have much pressure on those?

Q About 65 pounds.

Q Is this a morning release conference?

MR. McINTYRE: Yes, I think this should be a morning conference.

Q How about Wallace and his farm conference?

MR. McINTYRE: This is for morning conference. Anything on appointments would be for whenever you want it.

THE PRESIDENT: I will try to get Henry to stop on the way down.

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.



## CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #322,  
In the President's Study, Hyde Park, N.Y.,  
September 25, 1936, 12.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, how are you? How is John O'Donnell?

Q (Mr. O'Donnell) It's a sinus infection, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Sinus? That's a tough thing.

I don't think I have any news.

Q They are having a serious situation out on the Coast. It looks like there will be a ship tie-up next week, unless they can reach an agreement on the labor situation.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is anything I can say on it at the present time.

MR. McINTYRE: I think you might say something entirely off the record to the boys, for their information.

THE PRESIDENT: I can say it off the record so you might know how to handle stuff as it comes in. What we are trying to do -- you see, this new Maritime Commission has certain powers and it is going to take them quite a long time to get organized so that they can have meetings with both sides out there. What they are trying to do is to get both the longshoremen and the ship companies to agree to keep on with work under the present agreement until such time as they have a chance to sit down around the table and talk it all over.

MR. McINTYRE: I was told unofficially yesterday by somebody not an official that the workers themselves had made that suggestion to the operators.

THE PRESIDENT: That I do not know officially but if one side makes



it, it is going to be awfully hard for the other side to turn it down. Just off the record, there are pretty ugly rumors about certain people who are working out there to force a showdown at this time. I don't mean Bridges and his crowd. I think you pretty well know who the fellow is.

MR. MCINTYRE: Miss Perkins' "good boy." The boys know that story about Miss Perkins calling up Bridges and saying, "Be a good boy."

THE PRESIDENT: There is also the fact, off the record, that on the agreement two years ago there is not much question about it that both the unions and the ship owners have failed to live up to the agreement in various particulars at various times. There is fault on both sides. All we are trying to do is to use the rule of reason and have them sit around a table.

Q (Mr. Trohan) I put this on (a sunflower). The campaign is on. Can you give us any news on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Only news I can give you on that is what one of my neighbors said: that it is yellow all through; that it has got a <sup>[heart?]</sup> black beard and that it is only good for parrot food.

Q That is a sweeping indictment.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That's off the record, too.

Q Will the Commission -- the Maritime Commission take part in the strike discussions?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so. I will see them next Wednesday.

Q May we use the fact that you will see them next Wednesday?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Are there any plans you can give us regarding the trips?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We talked over all the various possibilities yes-



terday. There are various reasons but the same general old one holds good as to why I can't make plans through October. I can't be away from base too far and any plan that is made is subject to cancellation on three minutes' notice.

MR. MCINTYRE: I think Fred (Storm) and some of the boys had the same difficulty last night that I found when you gave us instructions to make up an itinerary: How to cover all the points suggested and get back in five days.

Q Is that situation over there as intense as it was a few months ago?

THE PRESIDENT: I can only answer that off the record. In other words, I can't give it to you as anything but off the record and strictly off the record. About this French franc situation: Everybody is working on it. You can't even let that cat out of the bag. It will probably break from the other side because our French friends are apt to talk out loud before our other friends do. But they have to break the story over there. It is for the advantage of the situation to have it come from France instead of from London or Washington.

Q It came out this morning.

Q In the paper this morning there was a story about the franc and someone said that large gold shipments to this country had been made. The story out of Washington said it would not do any harm but the story from Paris dealt quite lengthily with the franc situation.

THE PRESIDENT: It ~~only~~ dealt with it to the extent that they let the cat out of the bag that they are awfully worried.

MR. MCINTYRE: Can't we express it that it is not as tense as it was



a month ago?

THE PRESIDENT: That does not sound right.

MR. McINTYRE: I mean off the record.

THE PRESIDENT: That is off the record. Also, again off the record, all these things involve something. If France does something, it involves going to the French Parliament, and you know what that means at this particular stage of the game. The French Parliament always riles up and if the Blum Government stands or falls, we have to be careful not to say things over here that backlash over there. I have been sitting up nights -- I sat up last night until about one o'clock (indicating telegrams piled on his desk), so it has not been a complete holiday.

Q Is the situation out in the Far East giving you any cause for concern?

THE PRESIDENT: There again I can't talk except off the record. Just for your information, there has been a rather interesting development the past month in the Far East. It was about two months ago that the Cantonese Revolt blew up and the Cantonese armies disbanded. Since then, for the first time in ten years, there has been a definite rapprochement between the Cantonese and the Nanking group. In other words, the tendency has been for them to unite. And further west, in the provinces out there, they are thinking more in terms of an integrated China and they are working with <sup>the Chiang</sup>/Kai-Chek Government. Of course those poor devils haven't anything to fight Japan with but it looks as if they were gradually uniting with the idea of saying to Japan, "Are you going to stop and where are you going to stop? If you don't



stop, we will have to fight to protect our country." Meanwhile, the Japs have gone up the Yangtze six hundred miles with ships and troops. They have practically got Shanghai and the thing looks as if it might break, but not necessarily this week or next week. It is heading up toward resistance on the part of China but you can't tell when that will happen.

Q The Japanese seem to be taking ports where the revenues come in.

THE PRESIDENT: It is one of those situations, Fred (Mr. Storm), where you can't tell from one day to the next.

Q Entirely off the record, because I could not quite understand the dispatch we had this morning from Paris on the franc: Our man wrote the story in a manner which would indicate that the French Government could devalue the franc without calling Parliament. Would that be an assumption of temporal powers?

THE PRESIDENT: As far as I know, they would use the powers given them by the last Parliament which, as I understand it, included the right to embargo shipment of gold, but they would have to go to Parliament for the right to take the franc off the fixed gold point, the point at which it is fixed at the present time by law.

Q There would have to be an affirmation by Parliament?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, before they could change the gold point of the franc, the gold content of the franc. But they could take the first step, such as the embargo, without calling Parliament. Then, of course, there are so many different figures. There is not only the rate between the dollar and the franc and the dollar and the pound but there is what they call the "cross-rate,"



being a triangular thing and only an Einstein can understand it. You cannot just say that the dollar will have this relationship to the franc and that relationship to the pound unless you know the relationship of the pound to the franc, what that is going to be, otherwise you might be out of luck.

Of course, absolutely off the record, this is more or less in line with what happened in London in 1933. It is a very interesting thing to go back and read those papers because what they wanted us to do -- the gold bloc that the French Government was playing with -- was to establish a fixed rate, the pound with the gold bloc and the gold bloc with each other.

The pound was then about 4.10 or 4.20. They wanted us to come in and we discovered subsequently that the British had perfectly definitely in mind that they wanted the pound at 3.50 and the effect, if I had gone ahead with that agreement proposed in London, would have been, through that cross-rate I am talking about to get a 3.50 pound which, of course, would have absolutely wrecked our level of values in this country and we would have had to go in on a 40-cent dollar or something like that and we would have been bound, if we had gone in.

Q You gave us a pretty good press conference at Campobello.

THE PRESIDENT: So what we are doing, we feel that the British price level and our price level around approximately \$5. is pretty good. The British, of course, always haggle and say, "Let us go back to \$4.86," but around \$5., approximately, is a pretty -- gives a pretty good natural level of prices, both in Great Britain and here.



If we can bring the French into that without destroying that British-American level, we will have accomplished something that means unofficial stabilization with the right, of course, to every country at any time, if their domestic level is affected adversely, to change on twenty-four hours' notice. In other words, we are not tied.

Q A flexible managed stabilization?

THE PRESIDENT: A flexible managed stabilization and subject to re-negotiation and change on the part of any one country on twenty-four hours' notice.

You see, the British Government and our Government are keeping our rate of exchange pretty even and if the French can work out something along the same line, you can get three nations working toward the same objective and cooperation without anything that ties the hands of any individual nation in the case of a national emergency.

Q Still off the record, the reports from France indicate that there might be some violent opposition to a plan along those lines.

THE PRESIDENT: They hope not, because, in the present condition of all France, it is awfully ticklish. In fact, the easiest way of telling you what happened is by comparison. Suppose Brother Hoover had remained President until April, 1936, carrying on his policies of the previous four years; in other words, hadn't taken any steps towards social security or helping the farmer or cutting out child labor and shortening hours, etc., and old-age pension. Had that been the case, we would have been a country this past April very similar to the country that Blum



found when he came in. The French for 25 or 30 years had never done a thing in the way of social legislation. Blum started in and he jumped right into the middle of a strike the first week he was in office. Well, they demanded a 48-hour week or something like that and he put through legislation that did provide for shorter hours in industry. Then they demanded a one-week's holiday with pay and then they demanded, immediately, a commission to set up an old-age pension plan. Well, all of those Blum got through but, query, was it too late?

In other words, suppose I had come in in April, 1936, and the country had been going on for three years without any of the type of legislation we had, would it have been too late last April for me to go in and start all of those new things?

And I think if Blum -- of course I cannot say anything to even intimate that I am in favor of Blum -- but if Blum can be kept there for a while he may be able to do certain things that almost every nation in the world has done. We did not start until three years ago. The question is, "Has he the time before there is a serious outbreak?" Of course they are terribly upset in France. The thing that may hold them together is the fact that if the Spanish rebellion goes through, they will be surrounded by Germany, Italy and Spain and that may solidify the French and prevent an outbreak.

Q So far as the devaluation of the franc is concerned, their hands are being virtually forced. They haven't any alternative.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Every two or three weeks there is another drive and every time there is a drive against the franc we get another



20 or 30 or 40 millions of gold from them. Of course there is an end to it. They have to stop some day. They were up to about 4 billions, as I remember it, about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  billions of gold and I think they are down now to close to one billion. They ought not to go much lower, and we would not mind letting them have some gold. (Laughter)

Q Getting back to your plans, the gentlemen of the press are rather getting the impression that you will go no further west than Denver.

THE PRESIDENT: There again, I would like -- if the time comes when I can go clear through to the Coast, I will still do it. I will probably have something on the next trip, after the Pittsburgh-World Series trip. I will probably have something on the next one about, I should think, the day I get to Washington -- Wednesday. Then it will probably be only one trip ahead.

MR. MCINTYRE: As a matter of fact, that will probably continue all during the month?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The only fixed date is the final big meeting in Madison Square Garden, the Saturday before Election. One other you can tell about is this Statue of Liberty -- Fiftieth Anniversary of the dedication of the Statue of Liberty, New York Harbor, on the 28th of October.

Q Non-political?

THE PRESIDENT: Under the auspices of the Franco-American Committee.

Q That would be the 28th for the Statue of Liberty and the 29th in Madison Square Garden?

THE PRESIDENT: The 31st, I think. The last day -- Saturday, the 31st.



Q Will you speak at that ceremony?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The French Ambassador and the Secretary of State, and so on,

Q Will this next trip be to Denver?

THE PRESIDENT: I won't say Denver. It will be a trip out west, as far as I can go.

Q Will you be up here on Election Day?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Do you still plan to be back here from the ball game?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



Q Anything on the international currency situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what you read in the papers. This is off the record -- you had better ask the State Department whether they have anything from Switzerland about the reduction of quotas. I understand they did have something on Swiss quotas.

Q Secretary Morgenthau said he would recommend the continuing of the stabilization (fund) but would not want to comment on the power to continue to deflate the dollar. He said that was up to you.

THE PRESIDENT: You are premature. Not right yet.

Q When (William) Green called on you yesterday at Hyde Park, did he talk to you about the schism -- (interrupted by laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing more than he told everybody down in Poughkeepsie; that's all.

Q On the international situation, could we do away with the power to devalue further until Great Britain went on a gold standard such as ours, within a bracket?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a pretty hypothetical question, but I should say, offhand, that in order to retain our primary purpose, what has always been the primary purpose, which is to retain our domestic values, that it should be in the Government emergency powers to prevent the destruction of domestic values through unexpected action on the part of another nation or nations. I don't know whether -- I think that is about as clear as it can be made. In other words, action would only be used in case of some unexpected world convulsion.

Q As I understand it, their market is fixed by the free gold market in London?



## CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #323,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
October 6, 1936, 4.20 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Gosh, I haven't seen any of these people for a long time. How is everybody?

Q (Mr. Young) Fine.

THE PRESIDENT: Russ, how have they been behaving?

Q (Mr. Young) Very good.

Q We can take a good story this afternoon.

THE PRESIDENT: Of what? The ball game?

Q Even take your comments on that.

Q Who won, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: New York. (Laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is a bit of news anywhere. It is very dull.

Q Is your Western trip ready to announce?

THE PRESIDENT: Mac (Mr. McIntyre)?

MR. MCINTYRE: No, sir; it is not.

THE PRESIDENT: We are still working on railroad timetables.

Q Is it apt to be before the end of the day?

THE PRESIDENT: I think we will get it out by tonight.

Q Is there any progress report on the discussions between T.V.A. and the private utilities regarding the contracts?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word since I got back.

Q The discussions are still going on?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so. I don't even know if they have met.



THE PRESIDENT: Very much, yes.

Q We have a very narrow range?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q I was wondering whether, as long as they are on the free gold market --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Of course one answer to that is that controlling such a very large amount of gold ourselves, we have quite an influence on the prices in the free gold market.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any other news at all. I am going to start working on speeches tonight and tomorrow and the next day.

Q No comment on Al Smith?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Any new members of the Maritime Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: No; there won't be anything until after Election.

Q I understand that Secretary Ickes, at his own press conference today, announced in his speech that he had documentary evidence of some connection between the Republican high command and Father Coughlin.

THE PRESIDENT: His speech or my speech?

Q His speech.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard it.

Q Sir, is your major speech going to be at Omaha?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Will that be Saturday night?

THE PRESIDENT: Saturday night.



Q Have you any comment on the reports that you are going to ask for the merging of the Resettlement Administration?

THE PRESIDENT: New one on me.

Q Will that major speech be a farm speech?

THE PRESIDENT: I had better not start giving you topics. I haven't really decided on any of the topics yet, finally.

Q By any chance, will you include a Minnesota point in the Western trip?

THE PRESIDENT: That is what we are working on now -- schedules. I don't know.

Q Wisconsin?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It depends on the schedule.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #324,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
October 27, 1936, 4.10 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Just got our schedules. Are you all ready for another trip?

Q We are all set. My laundry came back this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: It is pretty rough -- I don't mean the laundry. I mean one trip after another. Where is Russ?

Q Laid up with a cold.

THE PRESIDENT: Fred isn't old enough for a cold.

Q You think Russ is resting up for a week-end trip to Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: That's it.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news. We have the schedule for Wednesday and Thursday which I think is all right for distribution. Some of you look rested up. You have had a good, quiet week end.

Q Mr. President, have you any plans for extension of the C.C.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot give you any definite figures but there will undoubtedly be an estimate in the Budget for continuing the C.C.C. for the fiscal year 1938. I am checking now on figures to determine how many we can expect in the way of applications for enrollment from relief families. I am not certain that the figure of 350,000 would be justified but, as far as I can tell now, a figure of 300,000 probably would be justified. However, the final check has not been made.

I got a very interesting letter from Fechner about the



physical work that the C.C.C. can continue to do as a permanent organization, showing that the work that they have done is really only the beginning of a much longer program. That program, of course, would cover all public lands. If you want that letter, Steve (Mr. Early) can give you a copy of it. Can you get out a copy, Steve?

(Mr. Early indicated in the affirmative.)

Q I would like to have a copy of it.

THE PRESIDENT: It gives an idea of the work they are doing.

Q Is the 300,000 a larger enrollment or a smaller?

THE PRESIDENT: A little smaller. I put in last year for 300,000 and Congress raised it to 350,000 but, as you know, at that time there were various things happening such as the floods last spring.

I don't think there is anything else.

Q Has anybody asked you about the N.R.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: What about it?

Q Your son, James, is quoted as saying it would be extended in the next Administration.

THE PRESIDENT: He was also quoted as not having said it. You pays your money and you takes your choice. Being his father, I prefer to believe him rather than the Worcester Star.

Q Telegram.

THE PRESIDENT: Telegram. Excuse me. (Laughter)

Q I have no connection with either. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, to get back to the N.R.A., do you plan to extend it?

THE PRESIDENT: Read my speeches, past and future.



Q Can you tell us what Mr. Hugh Johnson was doing here today?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we talked about a great many things. We talked about the campaign and about the audiences he has addressed.

Q Talk about a new N.R.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q That will bob up yet if we are not careful. (Laughter)

Q Can you tell us what the three New York stockbrokers talked about yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: We reminisced about the days when I used to be the office boy in the law firm in New York that represented the New York Stock Exchange.

Q What was the name of that firm?

THE PRESIDENT: Carter, Ledyard and Milburn -- and they still are.

I am not. (Laughter)

Q Did you discuss the Securities Exchange Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Only mentioned the fact that there seems to be really very good cooperation between the Stock Exchange and the S. E. C.

Q That there has been?

THE PRESIDENT: Has been and is.

Q Offer any bets on the Election?

THE PRESIDENT: I might lose my vote if I told you.

Q Anything on the West Coast Maritime situation today?

THE PRESIDENT: They are conferring; still at it this afternoon.

Nothing settled finally yet.

Q Is there any plan, Mr. President, to whittle down the W.P.A. after next year?



THE PRESIDENT: We won't be able to tell about that until a good deal later on. If you remember last year, this is a thing I got to leave up in the air and I did it this period last fall. It was just about this time that I said I did not know whether the estimates for the fiscal year 1938 would go in in January with the rest of the Budget or whether I would hold them back until March. In other words, the present money is supposed to carry us through until July and it means estimating relief conditions so far ahead that, again this year, I don't know whether I will put in for the fiscal year beginning next July in January or wait and send that in a little bit later. I am exactly in the same position I was last year.

Q You wish to leave the figures in the Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: The figures depend on the last minute finding of conditions.

Q Mr. President, you don't seem to be very much in doubt about the results of the Election if you are planning --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You see, I have to remember to put in a Budget in January and if I don't do it in January, somebody has to do it later on.

Q Was Jesse Jones right in saying that he expected you to revise the undistributed profits law?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't read what he said. I didn't read it.

Q He said he knew you would be willing to have the law reviewed and modified.

THE PRESIDENT: I would have to get his actual phraseology. The easiest thing to do is to refer you to the one sentence in that



speech which applies to all revenue laws.

Q Senator Guffey said in a speech that he would re-introduce the

Guffey Coal Act and said he would have your support in so doing.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we have a substitute Coal Act.

Q It failed at the last Session of Congress and he is going to vote for it all over again.

THE PRESIDENT: Obviously something has to be done with respect to coal.

Q You refer to your speeches, past and present, on N.R.A. How far back should we go in those speeches?

THE PRESIDENT: About a month and a half or two months.

Q Just during the campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. You might omit something.

Q Was it in a non-political speech?

THE PRESIDENT: Probably. Most of them have been. (Laughter)

Q Could it have been the Detroit speech?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't remember. It is just a hunch on my part.

Q In your relief and budget Messages to the Congress, wasn't there some hint in those as to your position on the return of the N.R.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q I know there was something said in both of those about the responsibility of private business to take up the employment slack and that if they didn't that something else would have to be done.

THE PRESIDENT: That would not have anything, necessarily, to do with the N.R.A.

Q How do you feel as the campaign swings along?

THE PRESIDENT: I feel physically and mentally in very good shape.



Q How do you feel about the results on November 3rd?

THE PRESIDENT: That is down here in an envelope.

Q Will you be listening to the Election returns at Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I made a very bad guess in 1932; you remember that. I made a very good guess in 1930 but a very poor guess in 1932.

Q How far off were you?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I gave myself only 310 electoral votes, as I remember it.

Q Are you a bit more optimistic this time?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is in the envelope.

Q In your campaigning, have you found any reason to revise your original figure?

THE PRESIDENT: That would be telling what is in the envelope. There are three dates in the envelope.

Q Three dates?

THE PRESIDENT: There is a guess made way back last winter, another made in the spring and another made about a month ago. They may be the same and they may be different.

Q Will you give us all three when it is over?

THE PRESIDENT: We may be able to get a pool up on that.

Q We had a very good one four years ago.

THE PRESIDENT: Count me in on it. It is all right.

Q All right to ask where the envelope is?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; it is in the safe. I would not trust any of you.

(Laughter)

Q Will there be a fourth guess?



THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think I will put in a fourth guess the night before (Election).

Q Are your figures for each date different?

THE PRESIDENT: That's what I told you. You would have to look in the envelope but I haven't it.

Q Don't you know?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Are you getting bearish or bullish?

THE PRESIDENT: That would disclose what's in the envelope. (Laughter)

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #325,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
November 6, 1936, 10.40 A.M.

Q Nice turnout, wasn't it? Referring to reception to the President on his return to Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: Perfectly grand.

Q What was the occasion of your coming here when you were five years old?

THE PRESIDENT: We spent the winter down here when I was five years old and also when I was six. My father was a great friend of Cleveland's.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose I should start the Conference by saying that I haven't got any news but I do want to say this: that that reception this morning was perfectly thrilling and I appreciated it enormously. Perfectly grand.

Q How do you account for that, Mr. President? There are no votes here. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You know, that is an interesting thing. I am told there were more people here in the District that cast votes than ever before in history.

Q Over a hundred thousand.

Q Mr. President, have you opened the envelope, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I have; I did --; I wish you would not ask me the question because I am so far off.

Q There were a lot of us that were. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Here it is -- there is the original. The first date



was January 30, 1936, and I was very careful to put down no names at that time because nobody had been nominated. I figured out a Democratic vote in the Electoral College of 325 and a Republican vote of 206. The next time I wrote on it was June 5, which was about three weeks before the Convention, and again I did not put any names down. The Democratic vote in the Electoral College dropped to 315 and the Republican vote had gone up to 216. And then the next time I took it out was August 2, right after I got back from Canada. Then I put down the initials, "F. D. R. 340, A. M. L. 191." And then, here is the worst of all, on Sunday last, November 1, "F. D. R. 360, A. M. L. 171." I apologize.

(Laughter)

Q What frightened you?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, just my well known conservative tendencies.

(Laughter)

Q May we quote that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q May we quote what you said about the reception -- "perfectly grand"?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

And the only other news you may want to know is this possible South American trip but I haven't got anything to add. I still don't know whether I shall go and I won't make up my mind until probably the middle of next week.

There are two alternatives, the first being to take the cruiser on the 17th -- I have forgotten whether it is the 17th or 18th, from Charleston and go down into the Caribbean for two and a half weeks, playing around and fishing. That trip would probably



mean going down to the Windward and Leeward Islands to Trinidad, fishing on the way and then from there going across to the Central American coast and fishing there, and probably coming back and landing in Pensacola or Mobile or New Orleans, somewhere on the Gulf and then taking the train back to Washington. That is Plan No. 1.

Q Is that on the way back or down?

THE PRESIDENT: It makes a circle. Going down the islands on the eastern side of the Caribbean as far as Trinidad and then go west over to the Central American Coast and then going up the Central American Coast through the Gulf of Mexico to one of the southern ports. That is Plan No. 1.

Plan No. 2 is much faster speeding. Leave the same day, same place, and go straight down to Trinidad and get fuel oil there and then go straight to Buenos Aires, with probably one stop somewhere in Brazil to get fuel oil. That has not been worked out. Spend one day there and come back -- the day being December 1.

Q That is the opening day?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q That would not call for a speech, would it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q What time would that bring you back to Washington?

THE PRESIDENT: About the 13th of December.

Q You wouldn't go to Warm Springs?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I would have to cut out Warm Springs.

Q In either case?



THE PRESIDENT: No. 1 Plan, I'd be back earlier. If I do Number 2 Plan, landing in Pensacola or Mobile or New Orleans, I'd probably go to Warm Springs for two or three days on the way up.

Q Would you care to indicate what would govern your decision?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, general Government business is the easiest way of putting it.

Q Did you say where you were landing on your second trip?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I'd come back, probably, to Charleston.

Q May we, sir, expect any major appointments soon?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. Things seem to be running along with the vacancies still in existence. I guess they will hold another month or six weeks.

Q How about the Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: I am starting on the Budget tomorrow with Danny Bell and probably that will be the principal work all of next week, going over the Department estimates.

Q Will there be a speeding up of the trade agreements?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about it. There are, you know, six or eight in process of either negotiations or discussion.

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: We will just go ahead with those.

Q Do you plan any special mediation move for the strike?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you anything about it because I haven't talked with either the Maritime Commission or Miss Perkins. I am going to do that today.

Q Now that the Election is over, will you discuss your attitude toward amending the Constitution to carry out the purposes of



the New Deal?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Why spoil another happy day?

Q Mr. President, do you contemplate waiting until you get Supreme Court decisions on the remainder of the New Deal measures before drafting New Deal legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, let's make this a holiday.

Q Since the Election, I have read a great deal about coming changes in your Cabinet.

THE PRESIDENT: So did I. There is a very simple answer: I haven't thought about the Cabinet or appointments and don't expect to for some time.

Q Can we expect anything this afternoon, after you talk to the members of the Cabinet, about the shipping situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I don't know whether I will talk to the Cabinet. It is a special thing.

Q When you go to Buenos Aires, did you say who will go with you on the same ship?

THE PRESIDENT: No. If I do go, I will go on a cruiser. There will be very little room for any other people than my own staff and, of course, I will have to take along the Aides and the Navy people, et cetera. There won't be anybody connected with the Conference. To do it in that time -- in about 26 days -- will mean some all-high speeding. It would be a record trip, so far as speed goes, down and back. Average about 24 or 5 knots, which no other ship has ever done.

Q Will Weldon Jones likely succeed Frank Murphy?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Heavens! I haven't thought about it.



Q Pretty tired after your trip?

THE PRESIDENT: No. My voice is a little raspy but otherwise all right. I am going to stay off the air as much as I can but way back they put me on for this Community Chest.

Q Will the Jusserand Memorial be much of a speech?

THE PRESIDENT: No; about five minutes. And, when that is done, I think I won't make another speech for a long, long time.

Q What cruiser are you going to take?

THE PRESIDENT: The INDIANAPOLIS with the CHESTER acting as escort. That is where you (the Press Association representatives) will live.

Q I hope we get some liberty down in Trinidad.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a good place. The liberty in Trinidad will be short. The stop would be six or seven hours; long enough to take fuel on.

Q If you go there, will you deliver the opening address?

THE PRESIDENT: I merely participate, with the others, in the opening. I don't open it. In other words, there are twenty-one republics, all equal.

Q Do you expect to remain here in Washington until before sailing?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I don't think there are any other plans except this awful problem of mail.

Q Any idea of how many telegrams you got, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Mac (Mr. McIntyre) said yesterday there were about twelve thousand in Poughkeepsie. Any more?

MR. MCINTYRE: Yes, sir.

Q That is more than you got four years ago?



THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; a great many more.

Q That beats your birthday record?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. We will get an estimate later on. Of course I don't believe the letters have even been opened.

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.



## CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #326,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
November 10, 1936, 4.10 P.M.

Q Mr. President, have you ever gone across the Line (Equator)?

THE PRESIDENT: Awfully close to it, but not yet.

I don't think there is any particular news except that Fred Storm is congratulating himself that once upon a time he crossed the Line -- and he's got proof of it, too -- and he is chortling because I haven't crossed the Line.

Q Are you about to, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so. I won't be able to tell whether I can push off until about Sunday. I am not going to make up my mind until then.

Q Have you any comment on wages and dividends being paid out since your election?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except the headlines I have been reading in the papers.

Q Did you enjoy it?

THE PRESIDENT: Very much.

Q Did you come to a conclusion about an Inaugural Committee or chairman or anything connected with the Inaugural?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing until I get back.

Q You won't have much time.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, plenty of time. You see, they will have over a month. That will be enough to pull off a very simple Inaugural.

Q These young Democrats want an expensive one.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no; simplicity is the watchword.



Q Any possibility of Admiral Grayson being given the job?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't talked about it.

Q Is there a chance, in view of the recovery, to have a real party?

THE PRESIDENT: Real party?

Q Yes, old-fashioned?

THE PRESIDENT: No. As I say, simplicity goes with the Democratic Party.

Q As simple as 1932? Will that be simple enough?

THE PRESIDENT: I did not think that was so terribly simple. It started off to be simple but it grew and grew.

Q Well, we could not cash checks for your Inauguration.

THE PRESIDENT: No, that's right. (Laughter)

Then, of course, there is the awful problem of weather. Somebody told me that the average temperature for January 20th is about 31. That is pretty cold and there may be snow.

Q Will that affect your Inauguration? Will it be inside instead of outside if the Weather Bureau finds it is awfully cold?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Go ahead with the same --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. I can take it. (Laughter)

There is only one thing I have to say. I got hold of Ed Halsey to talk about the stand at the Capitol. I have an architectural thought that the stand proper should be back further near the door instead of so far forward because the way it has been in the past a lot of people were behind the speaker's stand so they only could see the back of the Chief Justice and the President.

Q You will have the people out in front?

THE PRESIDENT: Practically everybody will be out in front.



Q Have you reached any decision about the Constitutional Amendment?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't talked about it.

Q There is a report in Rio de Janeiro that Ambassador Gibson will be transferred to Berlin. Any confirmation?

THE PRESIDENT: That's another one. I won't say it is "typical."

Q Brazilian, this time.

THE PRESIDENT: "Brazilian." That's right.

Q Is it true that Senators Barkley, LaFollette and White are going to join you in Buenos Aires?

THE PRESIDENT: What? Why?

Q I don't know. Only that report is generally going around.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read that one. Which columnist is it?

Q I don't know. Do we have to depend on them from now on?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It is a brand new one.

Q Are you taking any part in the Maritime strike situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I am keeping in touch with it all along.

Q Any intervention moves?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing more than you read in the papers.

Q Arriving any closer to the appointment of a Comptroller General?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. I haven't done a thing except sign a huge accumulation of mail and do a lot of dictating and work on the Budget.

Q Anything about the call on you this morning by the Spanish Ambassador?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you had better say it was largely in the nature of a social visit.

Q He said he was a great admirer of yours. (Laughter)

Q Anything more been decided about the conference of state and local



tax officials on a general tax straightening out of the local and Federal taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing further. I haven't heard anything about it since Election. I suppose that Pat Harrison's Committee and Bob Doughton's Committee -- the Joint Committee -- will be meeting soon. I haven't heard the date.

Q What progress have you made with the Budget? Do you think you will get it cleaned up in time to leave on the 17th?

THE PRESIDENT: Not all the details but, in general, the round figures. In other words, Dan Bell won't have finished all his hearings but he will know, pretty well, the department estimates and I will have been over three-quarters of the Budget.

Q Is it likely you will send up a separate Relief Message this year?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say that is a pretty good guess. I have been talking to Harry Hopkins and all the others about it and it is a much safer thing to do to make our estimate on the '38 year towards the end of March, as I did last year. It is impossible to do it in December.

Q Is it likely you will ask a temporary appropriation to carry until March?

THE PRESIDENT: That is possible but that is on account of the drought. You see, the drought bit into a good deal of that one billion, four hundred twenty-five million.

Q Any idea of how much that would be?

THE PRESIDENT: No, we haven't those figures.

Q What do you think of the prospects for a balanced Budget the next fiscal year?



THE PRESIDENT: I will tell you that on the 6th of January.

Q Mr. President, will there have to be an appropriation in the Budget for the Social Security program that won't be compensated for by receipts and taxes this year?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't answer that offhand. I think -- the thing you had better do is to ask Dan Bell that question. I don't know. Roughly, the receipts -- this has to be off the record because you will have to check on it -- roughly the estimated receipts are somewhere around six hundred and fifty million. Whether the actual appropriation will exceed that, I don't know. You had better ask Dan.

Q Will you fill any of the vacancies in the Diplomatic Corps prior to the opening of the Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: There is only one vacancy. Russia, I think, is the only vacancy in the Diplomatic Corps at the present time. That is about the only vacancy and I don't know whether I will fill that.

Q Denmark, too.

THE PRESIDENT: Denmark? That's right. There won't be any shifts or changes in the other embassies or legations until later on.

Q Can you tell us anything about your visit with Tugwell today?

THE PRESIDENT: We talked about what we are going to do with the Re-settlement Administration on a permanent basis -- the two phases of it and its relationship to the farm tenant problem. It was just general discussion because we don't know yet what kind of farm tenant bill we will have. Of course the two things tie in very intimately in relation to farm families.



Q You do intend to continue the Resettlement Administration as a permanent organization?

THE PRESIDENT: Probably bring it in, like most of the others, under an existing department.

Q How about the National Youth Administration?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing. It will eventually go in under a department.

You see, when you get to that phase of it, you go into the whole thing of reorganization of departments and it is much too early to talk about any details of reorganization of departments.

Q You mean a new department?

THE PRESIDENT: New or old. We haven't had any reports yet. There is nothing you can write about it that would be intelligent because I couldn't write a story if I tried.

Q Do you have any views on the merits or lack of merit of the sliding scale of wages being adopted by the steel industry?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about it.

Q It is based on the cost-of-living index and wages are supposed to go down or up, roughly, as the cost-of-living index of the Department of Labor.

THE PRESIDENT: That, of course, is a step towards what we have all been trying to arrive at in all economics -- don't call it a commodity dollar because it is a bad name for it -- a general effort to have the compensation of people stabilized in relation to the cost of everything such as rent, real estate, commodities, so that we won't have those fluctuations which, in the past, have wrecked everybody -- both the ups and downs.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Lewis says that that means static misery, that



they can't get above their standards of living and climb into an upper class.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, if you made it permanently static, that would be true. On the other hand, if you have a wider distribution of the good things of life, it isn't so bad.

Q If I may be permitted to return to Resettlement, will the same policy be followed with C.C.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; relief and everything else.

Q Some talk of making C.C.C. permanent --

Q (interposing) -- at this session of the Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It is still in the discussion stage.

Nobody can write a story that there will be this or that or a consolidation of this with something else. It is silly to try to write about it because nobody has gotten to the point of even suggesting that this agency be grouped with that or the other agency or put in this or that department.

Q Any idea of when a report will be ready from the Reorganization Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, about the first of January.

Q Doesn't your Budget [and other policies] depend on that report?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Your Budget goes in practically in the old form because, of course, any change has to be made in one of two ways: either by direct legislation or Presidential Executive Order. You will remember that three years ago we made a good many changes by Executive Order under the law of the spring of 1933, which lasted for two years and I did shift quite a number of bureaus around. The Budget appropriation of such a bureau would follow



the bureau into its new place, so there is no budgetary difficulty. The amount appropriated follows the bureau.

Q As a result of your budget studies, have you changed your mind regarding taxes since your trip to the flood region? Any new taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: No, we haven't taken up the tax subject at all because we haven't cast up the final figures of the Budget. But I think we can stick to what I have been saying for the last two months that we anticipate no additional taxes.

Q Do you think there is any immediate prospect of a change in the corporate surplus tax to iron out inequalities?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. We won't discuss that until the Harrison-Doughton Committee goes into the subject.

Q And whatever the changes are, they would hardly be applicable to the calendar year '36?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Heavens! I should say, offhand, no; we need the money.

Q Mr. President, do you attribute any of the increased wages to the effect of this undistributed surplus tax?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; that is too theoretical a question. You would have to ask the president of each individual corporation and you would get a lot of different answers. There is no one answer that would apply to them all.

Q Do you anticipate any reduction in the --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't got to that point but I would not come to the conclusion that it would be higher.



Q Is there any possibility of naming an Under Secretary of State soon?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Judge Moore is Acting Secretary.

Q Mr. President, are you holding back on the filling of these thirty or so vacant posts because of recommendations for reorganization?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am failing to fill them because I haven't got the time before I go away.

Q Lots of them have been empty for months.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes -- and seem to be getting along pretty well.

Q Do you understand that some of these farm leaders to whom you and Secretary Wallace have been speaking have expressed a desire for a return of the Triple A instead of Crop Insurance?

THE PRESIDENT: All I know is what Henry told me and I gathered that what many of them are interested in is some method by which we can avoid the building up of the kind of surplus that wrecked prices in the past. Now, there again, when it comes to writing a spot news story, that does not mean reenacting a Triple A but it does mean trying to find some method by which these old surpluses won't recur. They are, apparently, more interested in that major problem at the present moment than they are in crop insurance. That doesn't mean they are not interested in crop insurance but they see the fundamental trouble in the past, which is the building up of unwieldy surpluses which push the prices down.

Q Is the Administration working on some plan in that connection?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are all talking about it and have been right along. I think the farm leaders feel that the present



method is not sufficient insurance against an unwieldy surplus.

In other words, they are going back to the old law of supply and demand.

Q Do you think it is possible to get a new organization within the Constitution?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is what they are asking.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #327,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
November 13, 1936, 10.50 A.M.

Q Good morning. Are those your Christmas cards?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They are from the National Committee and have to be signed.

Q Quite a crowd this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. They are going to be awfully disappointed.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: The Thanksgiving Proclamation is mimeographed and Steve will give it to you after the Conference.

Q Yesterday Governor Eccles called attention to the fact that neither the banks nor the stockbrokers were supporting this present market. Have you any comment to make in that connection?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think he put it quite that way.

Q That is what he said.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you had better see his language.

Q You mean the bankers are not supporting it and the brokers are not supporting it?

Q I think the brokers' loans -- they are not extending --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You see, saying the word "support" doesn't mean anything because they do not support the market unless there is a panic.

Q Will you tell us how far your Budget discussions have gone?

THE PRESIDENT: They have gone, I should think, about two-thirds of the way. We did two more departments yesterday and we will probably do a couple today. We will be pretty well through.



Q Do you announce your Budget and "State of the Union" after the Inaugural or at the opening day of Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't thought about it. My calendar stops the 31st of December and I haven't got my new calendar yet. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, there has been some disagreement among the various newspaper people as to how definitely you and the steel companies plan to adopt a cost-of-living basis for steel wages. Will you care to say if you did endorse that system?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what the system is so I cannot either  
--  
endorse it or favorably endorse it. What I did say and intended to say is that the cost of living is, of course, a factor to be taken into consideration and what I meant, further, was that that applies on the very, very low wages. It merely involves the question, "What is a living wage?" But it should not be taken into consideration in such way as to halt the improvement of wage scales.

Q Your remarks the other day had no relation, did not apply directly to the steel system?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because I don't know what it is. I never read it.

Q It has been printed in several papers.

THE PRESIDENT: The cost of living, of course, is a factor, especially when you consider the problem of the minimum wage. But, on the other hand, that should not necessarily be the controlling factor in places where the cost of living is very low because then another factor, that of buying power, comes into consideration.

Q Have you any program for your visit to Greenbelt this afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: Just look around. They are going to show me one of the



new houses and I will look at the grounds.

Q Nobody living there yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. I understand they won't go in until spring, about April.

Q Have you in mind any amendments to the T.V.A.? To stress other factors rather than power?

THE PRESIDENT: Dr. Morgan said he thought there were certain minor amendments, you might call them, to the T.V.A. that would stress a little more the population -- the social factors in the Valley. That is all I know.

Q Do you support that?

THE PRESIDENT: It is needed to improve the conditions in the Valley. Yes.

Q It doesn't mean playing down power?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. Oh, no. There are a great many factors in T.V.A., though, in addition to power. Possibly they do not make headlines so rapidly.

Q Do you find any special mediation needed in the Pacific Coast?

THE PRESIDENT: Not at the present time.

Q Would you care to say what you discussed with Charles Sawyer yesterday afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: The Ohio majority and that is all.

Q Mr. President, do you have any idea of calling business leaders to Washington with respect to cooperation?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no plans before next Wednesday morning.

Q There is a lot of discussion in the papers about cooperation.

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing new.



Q Anything new on Inauguration?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing more than I said the other day.

Q Simple?

THE PRESIDENT: As simple as possible.

Q Ride an automobile up there and go back (of the Capitol) and take the oath of office and come back without a parade?

THE PRESIDENT: Hitch the automobile to a post.

Q Why do you say you have no plans before next Wednesday?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not seeing anybody before next Wednesday except a lot of people who have to see me. And Wednesday morning I have a very definite plan.

Q Have you made no decision about B. A.?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you been invited to attend a London conference?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q A report from London is that you accepted an invitation.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Are you framing what you call "anti-war legislation"?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I am not framing a thing. (Laughter) Or anybody.

(Laughter)

Q Are you going to ask for any legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not in a framing mood at all. (Laughter)

Q That was a bad word. (Laughter)

Q Any comment on Rockefeller's letter to Chairman Farley?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I only read the headlines. I haven't read the letter itself.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what Governor Eccles and Mr. Landis



had to say about the securities market?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot tell you anything more than what they said about the securities market. They are much better at language, when it comes to talking about margins and bidding and selling stocks, than I am. I think probably the important thing was what they told me about this very large foreign buying and of course foreign buying, when it gets to a certain point, is a dangerous thing because those same securities can be sold very quickly in case anything happens on the other side. It corresponds to what they call "hot money." You cannot tell when it will go out on you. That is always a disturbing factor in foreign exchange and in the general credit situation.

Q Mr. President, is there any precaution you can take against that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you can guess that the thing is being studied; they have just begun to study it.

Q Mr. President, will you leave the country next week even though the maritime strike has not been settled?

THE PRESIDENT: That depends entirely on what status it is in.

Q Is your annual visit to Warm Springs definitely out?

THE PRESIDENT: It is for Thanksgiving Day. But, of course, if I do Plan No. 1, which is just the West Indies -- if I don't go to Buenos Aires -- I would stop on the way back at some southern port and probably stop in at Warm Springs on the way north because you go right past it.

Q How long would you stay there?

THE PRESIDENT: Just a few days.

Q Anything in the S.E.C. or Federal Reserve laws which would bar



foreign buying in the American market?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is.

Q Do you think there is need for it?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it would probably take legislation.

Q That is for control?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is that a possibility, that legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: All I can tell you is that we have just begun to study it. The Federal Reserve Board has begun to study it and I have asked the Treasury Department to begin to study it when the Secretary gets back next week. So it is in the early stages of study.

Q Have you given any consideration to additional labor legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, none at all.

Q Mr. President, is Governor Winant coming back as head of the Social Security Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so. I haven't heard.

Q Have you planned any changes in the Social Security Act?

THE PRESIDENT: No. There may be clarifying amendments. Isn't that what they call them?

Q On the foreign money in the stock market, would it require new legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it would probably take legislation.

Q Have you any estimate of how much new foreign money has come in recently?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I believe the Federal Reserve Board has given out some statistics on that.

Q It shows in their statement of gold coming in.



THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Have you any idea of the character of the legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: Not at all. Literally, we haven't done anything more than agreed that it is a subject that ought to be studied and the statement of Eccles to me that he thought it would require legislation.

Q How about a farm tenancy law?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope we will get one. It is a very important thing.

Q Anything being done about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Only this conference that has been held in Agriculture.

Q On these foreign securities: Doesn't the Secretary of the Treasury have the right to stop the export of gold, even if they do sell those securities?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Has Secretary Roper told you his plan for the unemployment census?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We won't take that up until I get back, probably.

Q Mr. President, what has been said the last day or two on the subject of securities would tend to give the impression that there is some fear of a runaway stock market.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that was one of the factors.

Q But the impression is given by what is being said.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Nobody has ever talked that phase with me at all.

Q Purely the exchange factor?

THE PRESIDENT: The exchange and the fact -- I suppose the easiest way to put it is this: that currencies of European nations and gold reserves have been affected in the past, as we all know, by



certain private groups. For instance, all you have to do on that is to look back on the attacks made, for instance, on the franc over the past three or four years. There would be a concerted drive by what might be called private syndicates -- simultaneous attacks on currencies which, of course, upset not only the particular currency that was being attacked but also the exchange rate between those currencies and other currencies and then, being a triangular thing, it affects the exchange rate of those other currencies among themselves. It is a disturbing factor. Well, that particular factor seems to have been taken care of by the gentlemen's agreement and that kind of attack on currencies is fairly well under control.

Of course, the obvious thing is to see what other kind of a topheavy situation might exist that, for one reason or another, would cause the same effect as the attacks on gold, or on gold currencies. The accumulation of very large security holdings in any one nation, subject to withdrawal at a moment's notice, is a dangerous factor in the world and it is being looked at from that point of view, as a potential danger not only to our currency and our exchange but to everybody else's currency and exchange.

Q The stock market itself is a secondary thing?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Somebody ought to write a story some day --

I don't believe anybody over here could do it -- on the expert attacks on the franc and the lira and the guilder and the pound -- and the pound, you can smash the pound, if you like. It is a very interesting story if one can find the inside facts with respect to the attacks that were made on those things in the past four years.



Q Who is doing it?

THE PRESIDENT: There are all kinds of rumors. That is why the thing should be studied and written up.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #328,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
November 17, 1936, 10.55 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a release that Steve will give to you, the appointment of a committee to look into the farm tenancy problem. The Secretary of Agriculture is the Chairman. It is quite a large committee but it is a pretty important one. They are asked to report by the 1st of February. Steve has the whole thing.

The only other thing I have got is that we can announce the appointment of a new Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Charles Edison of New Jersey. We are all very glad to have him. Of course he was in touch with naval things during the old days during the war when Thomas Edison was Chairman of the Naval Consulting Board. He is coming down, I think, probably not for two or three weeks because he has to settle up his own business affairs.

Q Is he President of the Edison Company?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q He is the son of the inventor?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q At present he is State Director of the National Emergency Council?

THE PRESIDENT: I think he is.

Q I have been directed to ask you a local question. There are three rate cases pending in the District with no People's Council. That is up to you to appoint.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I will until I get back. There seems to be a question in regard to the whole subject and I haven't had time to go into it.



Q It was recommended that the job be abolished.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Will you make any speeches in Rio or Montevideo?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe I can tell you that because I think it depends largely on what is decided down there by the Governments of Brazil and at Montevideo.

Q We had a report, Mr. President, that you were expected to address a special session of the Brazilian Legislature.

THE PRESIDENT: That is one of the plans but, as I say, I don't think I should give out anything like that. I think that should come from the other end.

Q I see by the morning paper that by a change of mind or weakening you are going to have a big Inaugural. We would like to have it.

THE PRESIDENT: I talked to old Waddy Wood yesterday about the stand out in front of the White House. I suppose there will be a parade of sorts. That will be decided when we get a chairman of the Inaugural Committee, when I get back. I talked to Waddy Wood and suggested to him that it be kept inexpensive, and I suggested that he try to work out something that would more or less copy the Hermitage. Four years ago we had the front of Federal Hall in New York City, where Washington was inaugurated, so I suggested it would be appropriate this time to take the Hermitage.

Q Do you expect to see Commissioner Murphy? I understood he was in town yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: I am and I am not. I haven't talked it over but I will try to if I can. It depends on how I get through the day.



Q Did you give the mayors of the Sea Ports Committee any idea that you would appoint mediation boards or arbitration boards?

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't discussed at all.

Q Anything on the High Commissionership?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q There is a lot of talk about a Federal incorporation charter law to be enacted at the next session of the Congress as a substitute to N.R.A. Have you anything on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't anything except what is in the newspapers. There was a long study of that subject by the Federal Trade Commission a number of years ago. If you are interested in it I think they have a whole volume on the subject.

Q What do you intend to do or accomplish at B. A.?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the trip speaks for itself.

Q Do you believe that commodity prices will have to go any higher in order to keep recovery moving along?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask some Stock Exchange house.

Q I don't suppose your itinerary has been worked out in sufficient detail to say when you will get back to Washington?

THE PRESIDENT: Around the 15th. That is, it won't be probably until the morning of the 15th if I come straight back. If I go to Warm Springs, it will be twenty-four or forty-eight hours later.

Q Anything on the Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am all through with Dan -- as far as we can go. He is coming in this afternoon to clean up odds and ends. You see, he has not finished his hearings with all of the departments so I have had to leave certain details to him but the totals are



pretty well set.

Q Did you tell Mr. Sibley anything yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: No. He told me he might possibly -- don't have this come out from here -- he might fly down to B. A. just to take a holiday.

Q He told us so.

Q To return to the Budget, has the District been finished yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Will your Buenos Aires speech be available here or at the State Department?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I don't know how we are going to work it.

MR. EARLY: We will have it cabled to the State Department.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but it would not get up here necessarily in time for release.

MR. EARLY: It depends on the availability there.

THE PRESIDENT: I may not have finished until an hour beforehand. You know, I sometimes do that.

Q Does the apparent suspension of the youth project at Quoddy mean a possible revival of the Quoddy project?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't done a thing.

Q This morning it was announced in a special report that there will be a survey of the Florida Ship Canal to determine whether the amount spent has been justified?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't thought of it for the last six or eight weeks.

Q Will public works grants be held until you get back?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I approved quite a lot of them yesterday. I can't



tell you the total number of dollars -- you can't put it down until you check with them -- but it is somewhere around twenty-five or thirty millions. These have been confined to projects which can be finished by the 1st of July, 1937, and they include a great many projects which we did not take up before in the areas -- well, in the middle latitude and the further south latitude. You see, during the fall we tried to start projects that were in the snow belt so they could get started before the winter began.

Q Mr. President, some time ago you told us that the re-employment hadn't kept pace with the increase in business. Do you still have that feeling or are they now absorbing about as many as they should during this upturn?

THE PRESIDENT: I might tell you something about that before I go only I couldn't do it extemporaneously. Will you hold that question until tomorrow morning at Charleston?

Q I am sorry; I won't be there.

Q We will fill him in.

THE PRESIDENT: We will take care of you here; it is all right.

Q Are any steps being taken preliminary to the submission of the St. Lawrence Seaway again?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It is being studied by the State Department, the Federal Power Commission and the New York State <sup>[Port]</sup> Authority of which Mr. Walsh is Chairman.

Q Mr. President, Harry Hopkins, in a speech before the United States Conference of Mayors today, asked for a census of the unemployed. He says it should be done. Do you agree with him?



THE PRESIDENT: If you will define a "census of the unemployed" I will answer the question.

Q I don't know.

Q General Johnson, in his column, suggested that it be done in the same manner as a draft, such as during the war.

THE PRESIDENT: The subject is being studied at the present time.

Undoubtedly something is going to come out of it. The fact is that a mere census, a door-to-door canvass, is no earthly use because it will be out of date in six months. Nor can I see a constant ringing of doorbells; probably once a month your doorbell would be rung and you would have to make another report.

So, what I am working towards is the self-registration. It simplifies the machinery and saves enormously on the cost. I suppose the self-registration method would cost only 10 per cent of what a continuing census would cost. That is the way it has been worked out in England. Not that we would copy all the details of the English method, but the general method would be self-registration so that on the first of the month they would know pretty well what their figures are.

Q Will that be accompanied by a requirement that everybody must register in order to obtain relief?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. Farley is quoted as saying in his opinion that W.P.A. would be scrapped.

THE PRESIDENT: I'd like to see exactly what Jim said.

Q A registration of that kind, you would be able to tell at a glance by looking at it how many had been employed and if it were periodic?



THE PRESIDENT: No, not necessarily. We have got the number that have been re-employed through the present methods of reports by the employing companies. Of course there might be other factors entering into it.

Q Is there any limit you have in mind on the degree of the maritime strike before you will intervene?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Are you likely to make any move before you shove off tomorrow morning?

THE PRESIDENT: I won't know until before I shove off.

Q Before I say "Thank you, Mr. President," I hope you will have a nice trip.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it will be a very restful trip except when we cross the Line and the U.P. (correspondent, Mr. Storm) is going to have a gorgeous time because, having crossed the Line, he will undoubtedly be appointed an aide to King Neptune to advise the King as to what should be done to the A.P. and I.N.S.

Q Has he a certificate?

THE PRESIDENT: He finally found it.

This is off the record: Pa Watson tried to get away with it.

He produced orders from the Army sending him to Australia. He never went but he produced the orders.

Q Good-by.

THE PRESIDENT: Good-by. Be good while I am away.



## CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #329,

On the Presidential Special Train en route

Charleston, South Carolina, to Washington, D.C.,  
December 15, 1936.

This Conference was not stenographically reported.

Inquiries at the time indicated that the article by  
Charles Hurd in the New York Times, December 16th, 1936,  
covered in some detail what had been expressed by the  
President at this Conference, principally his "high  
hope for gratifying results from the Pan-American Peace  
Conference."



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #330,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
December 18, 1936, 10.45 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Well, you can tell who went south all right. George (Durno) turned out to be a very good sailor.

Q One of the best, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: How has he behaved, Russell, while I was away?

Q The good will secretary (Mr. McIntyre) stayed down in Florida a couple of days.

THE PRESIDENT: I wasn't asking about him; I was asking about your charges.

Q Oh, very well.

Q Isn't that a new watch chain?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I have had it about forty years.

Q Is that all?

THE PRESIDENT: Same one. Just been wearing it in the wintertime.

Q That is your heavy weather chain.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: It is good to -- I can't say "see you all" but at least have the feeling of your presence. The Dean (Mr. Young) says that your behaviour on the whole has been satisfactory during my absence. Those who accompanied me I brought through successfully. Some of them wanted the next conference in Rio de Janeiro instead of B.A. -- don't print that -- but otherwise I don't think there is any news at all.

Q Have you decided whether you are going to take your Message up in person, as usual, or send it?



THE PRESIDENT: I suppose I will take it up in person. It is a pretty good custom.

Q When?

THE PRESIDENT: Whenever they meet.

Q Before the Inauguration?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

Q In the evening?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Budget Message going up also?

THE PRESIDENT: That always goes up the next day.

Q The Public Printer was up yesterday and we all missed him. Do you mind? (Laughter) Would you be a reporter for us?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I talked to him about two things: One was that I am going to have printed the three addresses in South America because a number of people down there would like to have them. The other thing I talked with him about is a growing problem in Washington and that is that the individual departments have been increasingly setting up these multilithographic presses, thereby getting away from their printing appropriation. We discussed the stopping of this tendency of doing a lot of what amounts to printing in the different departments and trying to go back to the centralization of printing which, as I remember it, was put through either in Mr. Coolidge's administration or Mr. Hoover's. At that time he found that there was a great deal of printing going on in half a dozen different establishments. He concentrated it in the Government Printing Office and we are trying to get back to that system.



Q It is cheaper.

THE PRESIDENT: The multilithographing can be done by the Government Printing Office instead of having it done in seven or eight or nine plants at the present time.

Q Are they getting around the appropriation or using the appropriation?

THE PRESIDENT: Getting around it.

Q Cutting down on the amount of material?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, also cutting down on the amount of material.

Q Wouldn't there be a good deal of research work that would not get out after it has been produced?

THE PRESIDENT: This is not intended to stop good research work. It is intended to stop the unnecessary printing, which always grows. It is a thing that every government ought to check on every few years. It seems to get out of hand. The same thing happened when I was the chairman of an interdepartmental committee about 1914. Nothing particularly new about it.

Q Did this initiate with you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q How did it come about, this shift?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we found various ways. There were a lot of departments that were doing a lot of this work on their own.

Q Mr. President, have you indicated any preference in the House leadership? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I think the easiest way to answer that is to restate a little well-known history. Since 1933, the fourth of March, there have been three different speakers elected by the House.



In two cases, as I remember it, there were contests, and the White House took absolutely no part, directly or indirectly, in those elections. There have been one or two majority leaders elected since the fourth of March, 1933, and again the White House took no part, directly or indirectly, in those elections.

It has been the rule and will continue to be the rule.

Q Do you desire a revision of the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act at this session?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a new one; never heard of it.

Q Do you expect that the Senate will ratify the Argentine Sanitary Convention?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so. On that, you know it is in my judgment a simple question of -- let's put it this way -- of necessity. If there is hoof and mouth disease in another part of the country and that fact can be established, and there is no danger of contamination of meat from that part of the country where there is no hoof and mouth disease, it does not seem exactly honest to bar the meat from the noninfected part of the country. In other words, it is a dishonest discrimination.

Q Mr. President, do you care to make any comment on the war debt situation, apropos of this month's defaults?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word.

Q Can you tell us anything about appointments?

THE PRESIDENT: Can't tell you a thing because I don't know.

Q Did you intervene to stop the W.P.A. cut?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you have any definite advice as to when or where your visit



might be repaid by presidents of South American countries?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't heard a word.

Q To return to your Budget Message, will you follow the same procedure as last year and wait until in the spring to send up your emergency (relief) estimates?

THE PRESIDENT: You mean the 1938 relief total?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Will you have the Budget (Press) Conference before you send it up?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q When do you intend to ask the deficiency appropriation for the first six months of 1937?

THE PRESIDENT: Very early; within the first week.

Q Do you think your tentative estimate of five hundred million made last summer still holds?

THE PRESIDENT: It is about right.

Q Did you set a date for Louis Brownlow to come in and bring his report?

THE PRESIDENT: Today, at 12:00 o'clock. I don't think it is the final report.

Q It is due pretty soon?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q What will you do in connection with the St. Lawrence Waterway Treaty?

THE PRESIDENT: No news on that at the present time.

Q There have been some reports that you are contemplating a cruise to the Philippines. Anything you can say about it at this time?  
(Laughter)



THE PRESIDENT: No. I will tell you all there is in that: At the end of a very delightful cruise, the last four or five days, all of us say, "Where do we go next?" We took a chart and we worked out at least enough cruises to occupy me for the next twenty-five years. Well, it is obvious that I am not going to be here for twenty-five years but out of this large number of delightful cruises -- this is good news for Fred (Storm) -- we ought to be able to find four during the next four years. There is nothing on the Philippines, any more than going to the Azores or anywhere else.

Q You said you were going to take Senator Borah for a ride. Did you arrange that with him?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen him since. But I think as soon as the weather gets warm enough and the little old POTOMAC is back in commission, we will go down the river together.

Q In an article in Liberty called "What Roosevelt is really going to do," I believe that Dr. Stanley High, who is advertised as your adviser by the magazine, said that one of the things you were going to do was to attempt, either by law or pressure of public opinion, to enforce minimum standards of honesty in the press.

THE PRESIDENT: How was I going to do it?

Q That is what I am asking you. Is it at a minimum now? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Of course I never comment on a different profession. I am always willing to comment on my own profession of the law. Of course, in the law the increase of standards of honesty is always a good thing.



Q Are you going to join this new lawyers' guild of Frank P. Walsh?

THE PRESIDENT: Is he starting a lawyers' guild? That is a new one.

Q Stanley High's magazine announced that it was an authoritative statement and several people have asked about it -- my city editors, etc.

THE PRESIDENT: Was that the writer of the article or your editor?

Q The editor.

THE PRESIDENT: That's different.

Q It is different. We made an inquiry of a White House official and did not get an answer.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read it and never saw it beforehand and know nothing about it.

Q Have you discussed or given any thought to the selection of a successor for Governor Murphy?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q Any appointments ready for announcement?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't believe there will be any until probably the first of January.

Q Are you authorizing the Navy to go ahead with the two new battleships?

THE PRESIDENT: I am talking about that this afternoon in Cabinet. I haven't discussed it yet.

Q Are there any more plans for a self-registering census of the unemployed?

THE PRESIDENT: Talking about that in Cabinet, too.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I think everything else is all quiet. I am cleaning



up (on mail) over the week-end.

Q Anna and John coming over with Sistie and Buzzy?

THE PRESIDENT: Anna and John are not coming. Sistie and Buzzy will come. Anna and John are looking for a house at the present time.

Q Any developments on the Philippine trade conference? They are sending a trade commission here.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard anything about it. It is due next year.

Q Have you anything to say about the death of Peter Van Horn in Florida?

THE PRESIDENT: Awfully sorry about it. Very good friend and awfully sorry to hear about. Just heard it this morning.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #331,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
December 22, 1936, 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: My Lord! Who is coming in?

Q Full house today. A big crowd.

Q Lot of visiting newspapermen, too.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there is no news. I hope the Spanish at the Gridiron Club was as good as mine. I don't know anything else at all.

Q Mr. President, do you anticipate that your relief expenditures that will go up in the Budget -- in the figures that you hope to submit in March, will be in excess of five hundred million, which is the figure you gave us at the last Press Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q There are some reports on the Hill that it will be in the neighborhood of seven hundred and fifty million?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea. I haven't checked.

Q Wasn't the five hundred million an immediate emergency?

THE PRESIDENT: But that had nothing to do with March.

Q March would be next year's?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; that is for the following fiscal year.

Q That would go up in the first week?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Are you holding back the P.W.A. power allotments now pending on account of the litigation?

THE PRESIDENT: The P.W.A.?



Q The P.W.A. power allotments?

THE PRESIDENT: They haven't been held up.

Q Pending the outcome of the litigation, they were holding that money in reserve?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't get the point.

Q Secretary Ickes said he favored keeping it in reserve pending the outcome of the Buzzards' Roost litigation.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't get it.

Q That is the case the Supreme Court sent back to the lower court.

THE PRESIDENT: The process is this: We have made allocations of P.W.A. money to municipalities which had conformed to all local laws and were clearly within their municipal rights in starting the municipal distribution of power. In a great many cases we have made allocations to them by the loan and grant method. Now, in some cases those have been held up by a court injunction and the money allocated is held, pending a decision by the Court. It will not be used for other purposes.

Q Could you tell us, in view of the Supreme Court decision on the arms embargo law, what recommendations you may make for permanent neutrality legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: You are about a month too early.

Q Are you contemplating cutting the W.P.A. by a third?

THE PRESIDENT: Cutting the W.P.A. by a third? That is a new one. I never heard of it.

Q What I meant to say was that if the five-hundred-million-dollar appropriation stands, that will mean approximately, for five months, a hundred million a month or so?



THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily.

Q Will you explain that to us?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I can't. In other words, there are, as you know, various transferable funds and I haven't got enough information about those funds to give you any figures at all. Other funds might be used to supplement whatever the sum is that is asked for for W.P.A. work. I don't know what the amounts are or what the funds are but they are being studied now.

Q That is on the basis of the deficiency?

THE PRESIDENT: On the basis of whatever is necessary to carry us through.

Q Is it safe to assume that you will probably make those recommendations in regard to neutrality -- permanent neutrality legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: You can assume that there has got to be some kind of new neutrality legislation at the present session because the present Act ends the 1st of May or the 30th of April. There will be a request for further neutrality legislation.

Q Can you give us some further information about W.P.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't enough information.

Q Do you contemplate any conference of business leaders between now and the time Congress convenes, as some reports state?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything down in my books. I don't think I have any appointments except appointments with the Director of the Budget and things like that.

Q Chamber of Commerce and industrial executives?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I haven't had a word about it since



I got back.

Q In what state is your Message on the State of the Union? Are you pretty well through with it?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't looked at it.

Q Do you think the Supreme Court's opinion on delegation of authority to you in conducting foreign relations will give you wide enough latitude --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) If I had read it, I wouldn't answer your question, but I haven't read it. (Laughter)

Q Through American diplomatic channels, have you been sounding out foreign envoys with the idea of having a possible world conference for trade revival?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you contemplate naming a second Assistant Secretary of Labor in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't thought of it.

Q Mr. President, have you received a report from your Committee on Crop Insurance?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. Henry Wallace said that would be in -- I think he said about next week.

Q Mr. President, anything to be said about reorganization of the departments, coordination of the departments, such as putting R. A. under the Department of Agriculture?

THE PRESIDENT: No. On that -- this is just off the record and for your information: The Committee which has been studying the subject of reorganization of Government has submitted -- they have talked over with me some preliminary, wholly preliminary



suggestions. They are not even in the form of a report. I am going to see Senator Byrd and Congressman Buchanan some time in the next week to talk over these preliminary suggestions and that is as far as it has got.

Now, by way of suggestion to all of you, there is always the tendency in discussing reorganization of Government to assume the factual attitude. In other words, that Agency No. 15 in Department A is going to be transferred and become Agency No. 27 in Department B. Well, of course, that is not the way anybody has ever reorganized the Government.

We have three outstanding examples of Government organization that we know something about. One was Governor Lowden's in Illinois, one was Governor Smith's in New York and the third was Governor Byrd's in Virginia. Those reorganizations were based on the problem of good business management in conducting a very large business. That was the primary objective. I cannot give you the figures in the case of either Illinois or Virginia, but they were very similar.

In the case of the State of New York, in 1923 there were 120 state departments, agencies, commissions, et cetera, et cetera, all of which reported to the Governor. Under the reorganization that was put through in the State of New York, those were reduced as reporting agencies, that is, independent agencies, from 120 to 18. In other words, there were 18 departments of the State Government created and all of the 120 agencies were put into one or the other of those 18 departments. The departments in the State of New York had general purposes. The idea of the reorganization



was that, in so far as possible, the fact would be recognized that from year to year or over a period of years some particular agency would be better off in another department, but the principle was the maintenance of a definite number of departments and all agencies of Government should report through that definite number of departments, one or the other, where they fit in, and which department they fit into is a wholly secondary consideration and that is the principle on which this study being conducted is based, just as in the case of those three state governments I have mentioned. I might add to those three that there was a somewhat similar reorganization of the State Government for administrative purposes in Massachusetts about 12 or 14 years ago. It had the same objective.

Then there is always another tendency and that is to assume that a reorganization results immediately in a great saving of money. Of course the only way to save money in a large way is to stop Government functions and that is a thing that very few people ever think of. You can put two bureaus together and call them one bureau but if the two bureaus, now combined into one, do substantially the same amount of work for the public, there is very little saving in dollars and cents. You may be able to have one bureau chief instead of two and save the salary of one of them, but that is a drop in the bucket when you come down to the total expense. As you know, the salaries of the Cabinet Officers and their Assistants is a drop in the bucket compared with the salaries of the clerks and stenographers and filing clerks and experts all the way down the line. Therefore, the mere saving



of money, while it is most desirable, cannot be assumed, as it so often is by careless people, to be a major item in the reorganization of Government. It is an item, yes, but, as I remember it in the case of those different states, the actual money saving by changing the administrative setup ran somewhere between -- I think it was between one and three per cent. So, unless you terminate the functions of Government, you won't save very much money.

The main objective is to get an organization which, from the administrative point of view, clicks so that you don't have duplications and don't have problems as to who is to run this and who is to run that, giving to your departments, your main departments, a general field of work with the authority in the Executive to make transfers from time to time as changing conditions may call for them. Well, just for example, I think back to 1913 or 1914. I find a lot of bureaus of the Government doing a very different kind of work from what they were doing twenty years ago -- very different work and obviously belonging in some other department. Changing conditions have made it so.

Then, of course, there is always the other thing to remember -- I am giving you this as a sort of background for what is going to happen. There is another thing to remember and that is that the Constitution said that there were three departments of the Government, the Legislative, the Judicial and Executive. The Executive is the President of the United States, who is the only person mentioned in the Constitution as being the Executive Department of the Government. There has grown up in the past, over



the last 35 or 40 years, beginning back around 1900, a series of outside organizations that constitute -- instead of the press being the Fourth Estate, those constitute the Fourth Estate. They are agencies of the Government that are not under the President and not directly responsible to the President. The original theory was that they were quasi-judicial, and they were, but gradually a good many of the quasi-judicial agencies of the Government have assumed Governmental functions. We are now trying to place the administrative functions of outside agencies under the Executive, where under the Constitution they have to be, leaving them with their judicial functions and subject only to appeal, as it is today, to the Circuit Court of Appeals, thus drawing a line between the Judicial and the Executive.

Q Do you recall how many of those agencies there are?

THE PRESIDENT: Over a hundred.

Q Can you give us some example of what kind of agencies you are referring to?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, all of the commissions; practically all.

Q All of the commissions, would you say?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends a little on the language. You have the Mexican Boundary and the International Joint Commissions and the Interstate Commerce and the Maritime Commissions. It depends a little on the language of the statute in each case. A great many of them report directly to the Congress.

Q Are you considering the formation of an administrative court as suggested by the American Bar Association? Are you familiar



with it?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Would you care to give us an illustration of the kind of agency or bureau that, as you say now, has changed so materially in the last 15 or 20 years?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It does not occur to me at the moment. For instance -- I will give you an example: Procurement. When I was here in the old days, all procurement bids -- in fact, it was not called "procurement"; I don't know what it was called then. It was in the Treasury Department and they bought our pens and ink and paper and office supplies. Gradually that has been built up and they are now building post offices and I don't know what -- all kinds of office buildings -- and it is a tremendous organization. They are building public works of all kinds and, obviously, it does not belong in the Treasury Department.

Q Am I correct in recalling that this Brownlow Commission or Committee is not to report but simply to suggest to you? They are not to make a report to Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, they have a sort of dual or triple function. I think Harry Byrd is working with them; I am working with them; I think Buchanan has talked with them. I don't know the exact status but we are all working together.

Q Will there be a report?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q When you began your discussion, you said this was off the record.

Are we to assume --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I would not know how to write a story



on it, because I haven't given you anything that was factual. The only thing I have given that was factual is the fact that this Committee has talked the thing over in the preliminary stage and I am talking it over with Harry Byrd and Buck (Congressman Buchanan), and that is about all. I don't know how I could write a story on the rest of it, except that you can put it this way, as I said before, that the principal objective is to make this a good business organization.

Q And the rest is off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: Just for your information. What can you write on it?

Background? That is it.

Q Then it can be used without attributing it?

THE PRESIDENT: Use it as background, yes. But don't try to make it factual because you will be all wrong. And keep away from saying that this is going to be transferred there and the other thing somewhere else, because, heavens, we haven't even approached that and haven't a thought on it.

Q Can you name any item of Government work of the so-called permanent kind and character that could be discontinued with benefit to the Treasury or the public?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, for instance, you take two forms of relief we are running at the present time. One is P.W.A. and the other is W.P.A. We have two organizations; eventually we can combine the two. We would save a certain amount of overhead on the study of projects but only on the study of projects. Now, the actual cost in W.P.A. projects and P.W.A. projects -- the actual proportion of the cost that goes to the study of the projects is only



two or three per cent of the cost, therefore you are not going to make much saving. You may make a saving of two or three per cent.

Q Would that be eliminating a function? I understood him to say some function?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got to the point of recommending the abandonment of functions except, of course, in the carrying out of relief we are not spending as much money but we haven't abolished the function.

Q How about Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: About what? (Laughter)

Q If you were to combine Army and Navy in a Department of National Defense, that would not abandon any function but would save the same amount, two or three per cent?

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt it very much. Knowing the Army and Navy extremely well, I would like you to show me how to save two or three per cent by putting them in one department. I don't know.

Q There is a third phase of relief: the agricultural ring which, apparently, is beginning to kick up a little fuss with the formation of a bloc in Congress to see that agriculture gets relief. How is agricultural relief to be considered as a function?

THE PRESIDENT: That isn't a thing one would abandon at all. Agricultural relief depends entirely on what function you mean by it. If you take the case of the farmer who needs rehabilitation, that is one thing. That is agricultural relief in the strictest sense of the term. Now, whether that should be administered by the same people who give work relief or not is a question which, of course,



does not have to be decided at this time.

Q This question seems to have arisen on the Hill in respect to drought relief?

THE PRESIDENT: That is exactly what drought relief is. There are several things you can do with respect to the fellow in the drought area: You can improve his farm, conserve his water and dig his soil and lend him seed money on a loan and try to tide him over on his own land, or you can pay him a dole or take him to town and put him to work on a project. Or you can do all three. There is an awful lot of loose terminology. Agricultural relief might be anything.

Q This would indicate to me that if you built this new organization there would have to be new departments of Government and new Cabinet officers. Is that a correct assumption?

THE PRESIDENT: That is merely in the study stage. In other words, you are trying to become factual.

Q As you have spoken to me that has grown in my mind. But, as to the two forms of relief, there is no existing channel of Government in which they could function?

THE PRESIDENT: That is perfectly true.

Q Can a new department be created without a constitutional amendment?

THE PRESIDENT: Heavens above!

Q A Cabinet position?

THE PRESIDENT: If you read the Constitution you will find what I say is true: There is no position in the Government except giving the Executive Branch of the Government to the President of the United States. There isn't a Cabinet position mentioned. There



isn't a department that is mentioned. Congress creates them.

Q The Republicans were all wrong in the campaign, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Congress appropriates --  
(interposing)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress appropriates and Congress can abolish a department tomorrow. Congress could abolish the State Department tomorrow or create a brand new one.

Q Congress creates the department and outlines its functions?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

Q In your study of this Government as it existed prior to March 4, 1933, have you found any item of work going on at that time and still going on that can be discontinued advantageously?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't gone through it lately enough to be able to answer your question. I should say that there might be a number of things we could discontinue but not meaning a large amount.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #332  
Executive Offices of the White House

December 29, 1936, 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Hello Fred (Storm). Pretty good crowd today.

MR. STORM: Pretty good audience, yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I think Christmas cannot have been so very severe, there are so many.

MR. STORM: They are all on their feet.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: If anybody wants to write a feature story on Liberia, I have a memorandum from the State Department which is quite interesting. I did not know very much about it -- as much about it before I read it as I do now. It is quite interesting. I am not having any copies made but I will let Mac take it out to the Press Room if any are interested to read it over and write a story. The occasion for it is recognition of the new Liberian Government by Great Britain. You know, they went through a good many vicissitudes and we sent McBride over there and he tried to untangle it and then we sent Governor Winship over there and he tried it. They put in a good many reforms and they are paying their debts and the thing is going quite nicely.

Q Over in the State Department, we found over a period of



thirty-five years, that whenever the State Department has some story they want to cover up, they usually put out a Liberian story (laughter) and, Mr. President, this story was given to us last week when they were keeping quiet the story that the Erie was fired upon. I am wondering what story they are trying to cover up now. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I have had it for about a week. It is probably the same story. I am not trying to cover up by that. I am probably the only person who did not see it. However, you can check.

The only other thing we have is that the Times had something about an unscheduled conference to study the size of the deficiency relief appropriation, that the President called in Cabinet officers and heads of the New Deal agencies to cover, to discuss the problem. That is not strictly true. As long as we had all three groups here, we did have them in and discussed relief besides their own individual problems. There is no news. It is still in the discussion stage.

The only thing which we have decided, and most of you people who write financial stories will appreciate this, we decided that we are going to put in the budget message, in the 1937 figures -- that is this next fiscal year -- the deficiency bill figures which we will ask for so that we will have the whole picture. Now, the



actual budget message will go up probably on the 8th which is a week from Friday.

MR. EARLY: A week from Thursday. Incidentally, how about the Budget Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I go up on the Annual Message on Wednesday. I thought I would send the Budget Message up on Friday, the 8th, and that we would have our sit-down-on-the-floor conference with the financial people on the 7th. If that is all right for all of you let us put it down for the late afternoon of the 7th, which is Thursday afternoon. That would give you plenty of time to write your overnights on it for release when the Budget Message goes up the next day.

Q Mr. President, has the figure been set that will be asked for for the deficiency --

THE PRESIDENT: No; that is what we have been talking about this morning.

Q And that will show in the budget estimate?

THE PRESIDENT: That will show in the 1937 column so that the estimate of receipts and expenditures and deficit for the fiscal year 1937 will include all the items requested in the deficiency bill.

Q And the emergency item for the 1938 fiscal year will come later?

THE PRESIDENT: That will come later, yes. You can put it this way: That in regard to 1938 there will be estimated



receipts and expenditures and surplus or deficit, whichever the case may be, and that those will be complete except for the relief item, which will go up in March.

Q May we ask one other question about that? In theory that should be balanced, the 1938, or show a surplus, should it not?

THE PRESIDENT: That is why I was very careful to say there would be either a surplus or a deficit shown.

Q This figure --

THE PRESIDENT: That was an awfully crude question. Did you think you could catch me on that? (Laughter)

Q Do you have any District appointments or local appointments? Have you made up your mind on Commissioners, for instance?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have not.

Q (Mr. Storm): Is Jim (Roosevelt) coming down to Washington to become a member of the Secretariat?

THE PRESIDENT: No, he is coming down to Washington to do a lot of odd jobs for me. As to the question of title, etcetera, nobody has given any consideration to that.

Q Are you shutting down on allocations for the \$300,000,000 revolving fund for the Public Works projects?

THE PRESIDENT: The whole thing is still in the study stage.

Q Are they still being made?

THE PRESIDENT: The study is still being made.



Q I meant to say whether the fund is still actively being disbursed.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the last disbursements were made ten days or two weeks ago.

Q Will that be the last for some time?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Can you say whether you are giving any consideration to legislation that would strengthen the Arms Embargo Act, particularly in the case of Civil War?

THE PRESIDENT: Obviously, there should be a further discretion vested in the President with the appropriate penalties to take care of internal strife. I leave out the words "Civil War" for the perfectly obvious reason which is illustrative of why no Act can possibly take into consideration every future contingency.

In other words, ask yourself the question, Fred, what is a civil war and you see how impossible it is to define it.

The Confederate States, as I remember it, most of them seceded from the Union in the winter of 1861. Most of them had seceded some time before Sumter. Well, what was the status then? Was it a civil war?

Then, in the late April of 1861, Sumter was fired on. Hostilities were confined at that time to Charleston Harbor. Was there a civil war going on? I don't know. In the North, they called it a Rebellion; in the South,



they called it a War Between the States.

For a good many years we fought in this country a series of wars with the Redskins. They were recognized as wars because of the fact that special decorations were given to people who fought in them. They were the Indian Wars. Was that a civil war in the United States or not?

Further back, there was a Whiskey Rebellion, soon after the Revolution. Was that a civil war? I don't know.

In other words, civil war means anything or nothing and the ~~circumstances~~<sup>c</sup> and the particular case must be decided on by somebody who has authority 365 days of the year. That is about the easiest answer.

Of course it seems obvious that today, in this particular case in Spain, there are two organized groups of armies and the normal person trying to define the Spanish situation would normally call that particular situation a Civil War. There isn't much question about that.

In this particular case of the sale of these planes and engines, it is perhaps a rather good example of the need of some power in the Executive. It is, furthermore, an example of cooperation by business. As the State Department has told you, they have <sup>had</sup> a number of applications from American citizens and firms to sell munitions



to the belligerents in Spain, one side or the other, and the State Department told them, they specifically and definitely requested them not to engage in the transaction on two grounds, the first that it was contrary to the Government policy and secondly that it was endangering, even if only to a slight degree, of our desire to be neutral in this unfortunate happening in Spain.

Well, these companies went along with the request of the Government. There is the 90 per cent of business that is honest, I mean ethically honest; there is the 90 per cent we are always pointing at with pride. And then one man does what amounts to a perfectly legal but thoroughly unpatriotic act. He represents the 10 per cent or less of business that does not live up to the best standards.

Excuse the homily, but I feel quite deeply about it.

Q Supposing that the Government would not grant this license, or whatever you call it, for the exportation of those munitions?

THE PRESIDENT: We have to under the law. The law says we must issue them.

Q There are some persons who say that you have discretion under the law and that it could be refused?

THE PRESIDENT: Couldn't do it. Absolutely not a chance.



The law says that this Committee in the State Department shall grant the license.

Q A mandamus could be obtained?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, there is the other phase of the case. If legislation is passed extending even the present Neutrality Act to civil wars and I find, by an executive finding, that a Civil War exists in the same way that I would under the present Act that a war between two nations exists, and that Act should become law within the next two weeks and after Congress meets, we could then clamp down on this particular shipment under this particular contract or commission.

That immediately raises the question as to whether this particular individual could go to the court of claims and seek damages for the <sup>[profits?]</sup> promise which he otherwise would claim he could have made.

The best way of answering that is to ask you to read the Supreme Court's decision in the Neutrality case the other day. There is an intimation in there, while it is only an intimation -- nobody can guess what the Supreme Court would rule in a case like that -- but the intimation is there to the effect that it being an act contrary to the request of the Government, and the conduct of foreign affairs being in the Executive, that the Courts would not grant reimbursement to this individual for a loss of what he otherwise would have made as being



contrary to public policy. But, as I say, you cannot tell until the case is decided.

Q This manufacturer who obtained this license was quoted today as saying that his planes were not to be used for military purposes at all and he claims he had a perfectly valid right and that he would provide employment for 1500 skilled workmen. He says they are not to be used for war purposes at all.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course that particular plea was made in 1914 and 1915 and 1916, just the same way. They said that the export of machine guns would give work to Americans. It does not mean it is the right thing to do.

Q Mr. President, did you see the story this morning that there was a recommendation forthcoming, asking that a Central Press Bureau be established under which all the press relations would be handled?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes. Off the record, the Times Bureau had a brain storm. I never heard of it until I read it in the Times and I don't want to hear any more about it.

Q There has been a suggestion made that this Jefferson Memorial should take the form of a national auditorium. Is that right, Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: That would be in the jurisdiction of the Congressional Committee which has been asked to report.



Q I think you have to O.K. the design.

THE PRESIDENT: No; Congress has to decide on what kind of a memorial they want first.

Q Have you given any consideration to the O'Mahoney Bill, the Federal Licensing Bill, as a substitute for N.R.A. to achieve the goal set by N.R.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: That is one of the many, many bills being studied by the Department of Justice at the present time. There is no news on any of them yet.

Q Some of the Senators are complaining that they cannot make recommendations for Judges for the Judgeships that Congress created because of the 60-year age limit. My understanding was that the Department of Justice and yourself would not waive that 60-year age limit.

THE PRESIDENT: That has been an Executive prerogative for four years and I don't think I have sent to the Senate the name of any new Judge over 60 years old and I think I will stick to it. It is a pretty good rule.

Q Can you tell us what Sidney Hillman dropped in this morning for?

THE PRESIDENT: We discussed a lot of things. Among others, we discussed the breakdown of both the maximum hour provisions that we enforced until a little over a year ago and the minimum wage provisions that we enforced in those days. There seems to be a general consensus of opinion and statistics -- you might try to get a story out of the



Department of Labor on that or out of the Central Statistical Board showing the breakdown of the child labor provisions and also the minimum-wage, maximum-hour provisions.

There has been very little printed about it, but the fact remains that the breakdown has been constant and increasing.

I had one experience in the Campaign -- I don't think any of you who were with me saw it that particular day because it was half a mile back, I mean you were half a mile back. It was on that hectic ride from Providence to Boston.

We got into New Bedford and in that park there was the most awful jam. There must have been 20,000 people where there was room for only about a thousand and they were jammed around my car. There was a girl six or seven feet away who was trying to pass an envelope to me and she was just too far away to reach. One of the policemen threw her back into the crowd and I said to Gus (Gennerich), "Get the note from that girl." He got it and handed it to me and the note said this: It said, "Dear Mr. President: I wish you could do something to help us girls. You are the only recourse we have got left. We have been working in a sewing factory, a garment factory, and up to a few months ago we were getting our minimum pay of \$11 a week (I think it was \$11 a week) and



even the learners were getting \$7 or \$8 a week. Today the 200 of us girls have been cut down to \$4 and \$5 and \$6 a week. You are the only man that can do anything about it. Please send somebody from Washington up here to restore our minimum wages because we cannot live on \$4 or \$5 or \$6 a week."

That is something that so many of us found in the Campaign, that these people think that I have the power to restore things like minimum wages and maximum hours and the elimination of child labor. That was just one example of a good many in the Campaign and of course letters keep coming in all the time that just say that by Executive Order or action I can take care of these individual cases and, of course, I haven't any power to do it.

Q Have you received that report from the Committee that has been studying the effect of N.R.A.? I think it is a Committee on labor that George Harrison is on and --

THE PRESIDENT: Major Berry's group?

Q I think Miss Perkins and George Harrison are on it. They are stating the effect of N.R.A. upon industry and making certain recommendations.

Q Do you think something should be done to restore minimum pay and maximum hours by the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely. But don't write any story saying that the President is going to restore N.R.A. That is



the easy, sloppy method of writing a story. Anybody can do that. What I would like to have you do is to point out the fact that something has got to be done and don't go beyond "something." Don't get out on the limb, because you know how often you have sawed off your own limb. Say that something has to be done about the elimination of child labor and long hours and starvation wages. That is as far as I could go. If I were writing the story I would stick to that.

Q What did you do with the letter you got in the crowd?

THE PRESIDENT: I sent it to the Department of Labor and I sent a copy to the Massachusetts Labor Commissioner. What happened, I do not know.

Q Did you send a copy to the Supreme Court? (Laughter)

Q Can we look for a specific recommendation from you some time early in the Session on this proposal?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not a prophet or the son of a prophet today.

Q Did you see where Senator O'Mahoney has inserted in his Federal Incorporation Bill a new section which would give States the right -- for instance, a State which has approved the Child Labor Amendment, it would give them the right to bar from within its limits goods produced in States that have not approved the Child Labor Amendment. He bases that on the convict labor case. He says if it can be done on convict labor, why



not on child labor?

THE PRESIDENT: The answer is, see if you can get two lawyers to agree. I don't know.

Q Do you think the situation can be handled by State action without Federal help?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Did Sidney Hillman have a suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Was anything said by A. F. of L. counsel about the strike?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you come to any conclusion as to whether it can be done without a Constitutional Amendment?

THE PRESIDENT: Now you are asking me to guess something I don't know.

Q Can a sweat shop, by offering to take men on for jobs paying \$7 and \$8 a week, force them off the WPA rolls in order to do it?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a difficulty we face in a great many localities. People on the WPA rolls have been offered jobs on such a low weekly or daily wage that we simply, in good conscience, could not throw them off WPA rolls to take what we considered an inadequate daily wage.

Q Can you give us the subject of the call this morning by Senator Guffey and Mr. Walter Jones?



THE PRESIDENT: I would, if I could remember it. (Laughter)

I cannot remember what we talked about.

Q That is a good answer.

Q Did your conversation with Governor Murphy yesterday extend to neutrality in the Philippines?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q When are you going to name his successor?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't gotten to it yet.

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: (To the conference) Oh! Happy New Year!

I had almost forgotten that.